

The Messenger

Rev Dr E V Gerhart
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"As the Truth is in Jesus."

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Poetry.

CHRISTMAS HYMN.

"Empor zu Gott, mein Lobgesang."

F. A. KRUMMACHER, 1810.

Aloft to God, my song I'll raise,
To Him whom angels love to praise.
On festive-day, ye Christians sing,
Loud Hallelujahs to your King!

From heav'n He came, in sable night,
Who has become of life the light.
Now shines on us the mildest ray,
As in dark vale, the dawn of day.

He came, the Father's image bright
In pilgrim garb, yet clothed with light!
As Shepherd, with a gentle hand,
He leads us to the Fatherland.

He, who above in heaven reigned,
To dwell with us as man has deigned,
That we like Him might too become,
On earth and in our heav'nly Home.

He leads us on the peaceful road,
E'en as His brethren up to God;
And changing erst our pilgrim dress,
Will us with star-like glory bless.

Pure as the angels' harping lays,
Arise, thou lofty song of praise!
On festive-day, ye Christians sing
Loud Hallelujahs to your King!

December 15, 1879.

S. R. F.

Theology and Criticism.

For The Messenger.

ONE WHOM YE KNOW NOT.

The Messiah was the one great promise of the Old Testament, and the all-absorbing hope of the Jewish nation. All classes of people believed, that the fulness of time was approaching, when at length the promise would be fulfilled. Yet the nation had no eye to see that all-absorbing hope realized in Jesus of Nazareth.

Mighty wonders had been wrought at His birth. A heavenly vision had been manifest to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem; and in obedience to it, the shepherds had adored the lowly babe laid in the manger. From the distant East wise men had, by the wonder of a new light in the western sky, been attracted to Jerusalem, when, in response to their inquiries, the Scribes searched the Scriptures to find out where the Messiah should be born, and these heathen inquirers were directed to Bethlehem. When, because the wise men did not return to Jerusalem, Herod the Great thought himself mocked, he commanded all the children under two years, in and around the native city of Jesus, to be slain. Simeon and others had recognized in the child of Mary, the redemption of Israel. Yet now, after all these extraordinary attestations, when the Babe of Bethlehem had attained to spotless and holy manhood, when in the official act of John the Old Testament economy invested him with authority, and by the descent of the Holy Ghost, God the Father had sealed Him, when in the cities, on the plains, and the hills of the holy land, He was manifesting forth the glory of God, and He was performing the works of love and mercy predicted by the prophets;—when all these Messianic events were taking place before their eyes, Scribes,

Pharisees, priests and the masses of the people did not know Him. Every Sabbath the law and the prophets were read in the synagogues; and they are they which testify of the Messiah, even Jesus of Nazareth; yet the nation continued ignorant of Him, concerning whom the law and the prophets spake.

John the Baptist for a while awaked more public attention than Jesus. When the Sanhedrim appointed a commission to interview the forerunner, supposing that he might be the Messiah, John promptly disabused their minds, and announced, that the Messiah was even now in the midst of them, but they did not know Him. But John's testimony did not avail. John was the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord. He preached in the more secluded and less populous portions of Judea. The natural wilderness symbolizes the moral and religious world. The nation as a whole, though descended from the father of the faithful, though distinguished by the law and the prophets above all other nationalities, and though of a daughter of Abraham, the expected king of the Jews had been born, was nevertheless a region of dense spiritual darkness. To a people sunk into profound ignorance of God's Kingdom and their own vocation, this man of God was sent to bear witness of the Light, that all men through Him might believe.

By a slow and gradual process only, did the Light of the world dispel somewhat of the darkness. The multitude flocked to hear John; but of that multitude a small proportion only became serious and intelligent disciples. Larger multitudes followed Jesus; but only a very small number, contrasted with the millions of the nation, believed on Him as the Christ of God. Though He taught with authority and not as the Scribes; though His hypocritical enemies felt, that He spake as never man spake; though He wrought the mightiest miracles, all of them deeds of good will, of tender sympathy and salvation; though His words and works disturbed the composure of the higher classes, and moved the nation to its profoundest depths, yet convulsed by His presence, their eyes were not opened to see the meaning of the law and the prophets, and to understand the explicit testimony of John.

Spiritual ignorance shrouded even the chosen twelve. They believed in Him, but their minds were full of doubt and perplexity. They heard His words, but could not understand what He said. They knew Him, yet their knowledge was but a partial insight into His life and mission; so boundless a realm of truth was hidden from them, that we may say they did not know Him. After this manner our Lord addresses Philip. Said this disciple: Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?

By the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the chosen apostles were quickened and illumined; and from the day of Pentecost, the Light of Truth has been effectually dispelling the darkness of the world. Yet, as when the commission of the Sanhedrim interrogated the Baptist, so since the Pentecostal miracle is His explicit witness needful: I am not the Christ; and through the ages of history it has been true, that there is one in the midst of His chosen people, whom they know but superficially. In Him there are such unexplored riches of wisdom and grace, that it may even be said, that His people do not know Him. Their comparative ignorance furnishes new occasion each succeeding year for celebrating the Advent season. The Old Testament perpetually fulfils the office of a prophet; and John the Baptist stands through the ages, the organ of Moses and the ceremonial law, announcing a fulness of life and salvation still hidden from the perception and remote from the experience of Christians. Year by year Jesus of Nazareth challenges with increasing power the devout contemplation, and the closest thought of the Church and the world.

HERE thou art but a stranger traveling to thy country; it is therefore a huge folly to be afflicted, because thou hast a less convenient inn to lodge in by the way.—*Jeremy Taylor.*

For The Messenger.

"LITTLE ACORNS."

There is truth in all errors and heresies. From it they receive whatever of vitality and strength they may have. But there is no error or falsehood in truth. Whilst the evil influence of error depends on truth, truth has vitality in itself, and derives superior power from its own resources.

"The weightiest word in the universe, except God's own name, is this single syllable *ought*, and the weight of the latter comes from the presence in it of the former."

1 and 1 are 2. An axiom this in the sphere of abstract quantity; but not a truth, much less an eternal truth. The axiom is only a notional form, which has no substance or contents. Truth, on the contrary, is being or existence. The axiom is valid in relation to mathematical questions and processes; but not in relation to objects in the domain of organized life. The proposition: They twain shall be one flesh, contradicts the abstract axiom, but is just as valid. In the expression: One flesh, the word *one* is used as properly as when the same word is applied to the figure 1. In the realm of divine and human life reigns a dynamic law, by virtue of which the words one, two, three, signify substantial verities, to which no axiom of pure number is applicable.

Communications.

For The Messenger.

HOW THE THING IS DONE.

The membership of the M. F. Church is known to be made up largely of the poorer classes. Yet they raise very large sums of money in that Church for the various benevolent enterprises. Their annual gifts amount to hundreds of thousands and even millions of dollars. How do they accomplish this great and noble work?

It is not necessary to go into particulars. It will be sufficient to say, that they have a fixed way of doing it, and that to pastor or congregation in their connection can fail to enter into the spirit of the work without loss of good standing. Among them public opinion and the enforcement of Church discipline demand more than the faithful use of the means of grace, and the increase of membership. Liberal gifts of money for the charities of the Church are looked for. And if money is not forthcoming in reasonable keeping with the resources at hand, no amount of plausible showing in any other respect will be taken as a satisfactory excuse. It would be hard to find any where more individual freedom, and personal independence and self-reliance, than among the Methodists. They have a strong government, but it is not by any means an oppressive hierarchy. Still every one is drawn into the harness when practical work is to be done, and made to give when money is wanted. Their mode of doing this may sometimes be open to just criticism. It is likely that in their zeal, they do run at times beyond the bounds of strict propriety. Better is it, beyond a doubt, however, to run the risk of being a little too zealous and free in a good cause, than to die on the highway of a rigid decorum for want of spirit.

Bishop Simpson is a Christian gentleman of cultivated habits. When he goes about raising money, he does not leave his manners behind. True, he does not do like a certain military captain a generation ago. The captain was a lawyer of high social culture. He did not give the word of command in the positive style of the manual, but would politely say: "Gentlemen, please march; please halt; Company, please wheel to the right; please wheel to the left." Report has it, that that military organization did not keep together long, since there was too much kid glove and social etiquette about the chief commander. Bishop Simpson is a man of different make up. He is refined, scholarly, and often grandly eloquent; but he never starts out without having a fixed aim and a full determination to reach his point. And he is not the only one in the household of the faith, that knows how to do this kind of work. A powerful system of training, long since in general use and full force, has made the Methodists a body of in-

telligent workers, who are not readily at a loss to know how to go about their work.

We have talked systematic benevolence now these many years, and resolutions we have passed not a few. Still our treasuries are more than empty, and we have no common, well-directed unanimity of systematic work to fill them. No matter what the cause is which lies back of this financiering muddle, the fact itself is so tangible that no one can fail to notice it. And every right-minded member and devoted friend of our venerable Reformation Church must feel deeply pained in view of this notorious misery, which hangs on so persistently to our finances. God grant that the knowledge of this evil may speedily lead to the enforcement of the only proper means of our deliverance.

It will hardly be necessary, in order to do this thing, to break away from the old confessional standard and the sacred distinctive peculiarities of our denomination. Our Catechism, one may be allowed to think, has just the right kind of theology to make us personally active and liberal in the cause of Christ, if only it be properly understood and felt. Still we ought to see by this time, that the best, the most orthodox, and the most thoroughly Christo-centric system of theology or confession of faith does not fill our treasuries, unless it is practically enforced in a somewhat more satisfactory way than has been common among us thus far. If we do not need a revolution in doctrine and customs, we are not as fortunate with reference to a radical change of habit in the serious business of benevolent financiering. Here we must inaugurate a policy as direct and unfinching as that of other Churches, if we do not mean to be crushed and ruined by the disgrace, which now broods nightmare-like over our destiny. And must it be said, that we are not all anxious that this change shall come now, and that not all will do their utmost to make it come with all possible haste? Let those, who have the wish and the will, join hands and move on, and, if by the way any drones be found, let them find it hard to remain stationary in the face of the current. A little coercion of this kind will do harm to no one. It will wake up the host of God's elect, and make them move as if they meant to do the work which the Lord has given them to do.

Some years ago, a prominent divine and pastor of the Presbyterian Church in the city of Pittsburgh, visited every family of his charge once a year, for the special purpose of receiving gifts for benevolence, from every soul belonging to his fold. Such a plan, in the hands of a practical worker, must be a great power for drawing out the Christian liberality of a people, and it will not fail to make pastoral visitation a spiritual blessing. It will bring pastor and people face to face, and hand to hand, in doing good works, and make them both feel the blessedness of their common calling in Jesus Christ. And in this way money can be made to flow into the Lord's treasury, silently indeed, but so effectually, that the sum total may gladly be proclaimed on the house tops. If any like not the excitement and high pressure of public efforts, such as are common in the Churches, then let them adopt the quiet plan of that hard-working Pittsburgh doctor of divinity, and bring in the offerings of the people in that way. There is no lack of schemes and measures, where there is not a lack of will.

And as it is in the matter of raising money, so it is also in the business of circulating Church papers. Both measures belong to pastoral work, and cannot be separated from it without loss. Agents may do this work, but it properly belongs to pastors and congregations, who ought to be co-workers in this thing. And where pastoral charges are wisely organized, these practical ends can be easily reached. Pastors are, of course, expected to visit their people, and will come in contact with them more or less all the time. If, in these interviews, they urge not the necessity of giving and of reading, they fail to train the people in the way they should go, and lose one of the most effectual helps to the ministerial office. Of course, it is understood, that the papers of the Church give no uncertain sound on the great topics of a spirited public beneficence, and that they furnish matter, which will give proper direction to the energies of the Christian

mind. Editors and their co-workers are the very men that address the Church at large and create public opinion, specially in these days of a powerful journalism, and hence they may be expected to speak out boldly on all measures of needed reform and necessary effort. Truly there is yet much to do in our Reformed Church, in the way of making the press help forward the work of educating our people. It is amazing that this matter has been overlooked so long. Any one fully alive to the requirements of the times may well be excused, if he should sometimes feel like calling into service the famous mule howitzer of Josh Billings, which is said to shoot all around the horizon, for the worthy purpose of waking up our drowsy popular sentiment in reference to this thing. Such an artillery practice would at least make the dust fly, and perhaps give us a lively time for a season. But, having the example of Bishop Simpson and Dr. Riddle before our eyes, we may, after all, find it best to look at this singular state of things in our midst in a calm and hopeful way, while we muster our forces for a grand advance all along the line.

It is not intended to oppose or undervalue agencies. On account of the well known backwardness of many of those who ought to do the local work of our Boards, agencies are an absolute necessity. Besides, even where the local authorities are actively pushing the interests entrusted to them, agents and superintendents may do much in helping to consolidate the energies of the people. And if agents can be found, who are willing to undertake the task of drawing out the united strength of our heretofore scattered forces, and to combine these under their leadership, for a grand rally in favor of practical work in our communion, they should be taken by the hand and urged to go forward. It is a subject for rejoicing, that the Board of Publication has found a man, who has laid it down as a fixed law, to increase the number of subscribers to the MESSENGER to twenty thousand, if his life is spared. He ought to make his figure certainly, if a fair chance is given him throughout the Church in the East. Others ought to be equally successful in other spheres of kindred enterprise. And now as the unification of the whole Church is still going forward successfully, may we not devoutly hope and trust, that the odium of our past practical failures will speedily pass away, and we henceforth move on with that comprehensive power and persevering energy, of which the Germanic stock is always capable, when once it becomes fully aroused in any great undertaking. I. E. G.

CHORUS OF THE SHEPHERDS OF BETH-LEHEM.

Welcome! all wonders in one sight,
Eternity shut in a span;
Summer in winter, day in night,
Heaven in Earth, and God in Man.
Great Little One, whose all-embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

Welcome! though not to gold nor silk,
To more than Caesar's birth-right is;
Two sister-seas of virgin-milk,
With many a rarely tempered kiss,
That breathes at once both maid and mother,
Warm in the one, cools in the other.

She sings thy tears asleep, and dips
Her kisses in thy weeping eye;
She spreads the red leaves of thy lips,
That in their buds yet blushing lie;
She 'gainst those mother-diamonds tries
The points of her young eagle eyes.

Welcome! though not to these gay flies,
Gilded 't' th' beams of earthly kings;
Slippery souls in smiling eyes,
But to poor shepherds' homespun things;
Whose wealth's their flock, whose wit to be
Well read in their simplicity.

Yet when young April's husband-showers
Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,
We'll bring the first-fruits of her flowers
To kiss thy feet, and crown thy head.
To Thee, dread Lamb! whose love must keep
The shepherds more than they their sheep.

To Thee, meek Majesty! soft King
Of simple graces, and sweet loves,
Each of us his lamb will bring,
Each his pair of silver doves;
Till burnt at last in fire of thy fair eyes,
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice.
—Richard Crashaw.

The blood of Christ and the power of Christ go together; the one procures pardon for transgressions, and the other subdues iniquities.

Family Reading.

CHRISTMAS.

The happy Christmas comes once more,
The heavenly guest is at the door;
The blessed words the shepherds thrill,
The joyous tidings:—Peace, good-will!

To David's city let us fly,
Where angels sing beneath the sky;
Through plain and village pressing near,
And news from God with shepherds hear.

O let us go with quiet mind,
The gentle Babe with shepherds find,
To gaze on Him who gladdens them,
The loveliest flower of Jesse's stem.

No human glory, might, and gold,
The lovely Infant's form enfold;
The manger and the swaddings poor
Are His whom angels' songs adore.

O wake our hearts, in gladness sing!
And keep our Christmas with our King,
Till living song from loving souls,
Like sound of mighty waters rolls.

—From the Danish, by C. P. Krauth.

SAVED BY A SONG.

CHAPTER I.

The only sign of life, on this Christmas-eve, in St. Winifred's-court, was a faint gleam of flickering firelight proceeding from one of the windows of the quaint three-cornered house in which Michael Fray passed his solitary existence. Many years before the period of our story, the same month had taken from him wife and child, and since that time Michael Fray had lived desolate, his only solace being the rare old organ, the friend and companion of his lonely hours. The loss of his wife and daughter had left him without kith or kin. His father and mother had died in his early youth, and an only brother, a gifted but wayward youth, had in early life run away to sea, and had there found a watery grave. Being thus left alone in the world, Michael Fray's love for music, which had always been the most marked feature of his character, had become intensified into an absolute passion. Evening after evening, when darkness had settled on the City, and none could complain that his music interfered with business, or distracted the attention from the nobler clink of gold, he was accustomed to creep quietly into the church, and there "talk to himself," as he called it, at the old organ, which answered him back again with a tender sympathy and power of consolation which no mere human listener could ever have afforded.

Hear him this Christmas-eve, as he sits before the ancient key-board, one feeble candle dimly glimmering over the well-worn page before him; flickering weirdly over the ancient carving, and calling into momentary life the effigies of mitred abbot and mailed crusader. A feeble old man, whose sands of life have all but run out; a sadly weak and tremulous old man, with shaking hands and dim uncertain eyes. But when they are placed upon those yellow keys, the shaking hands shake no longer; the feeble sight finds no labor in those well-remembered pages. Under the touch of Michael Fray's deft fingers the ancient organ becomes instinct with life and harmony. The grand old masters lend their noblest strains, and could they revisit earth, need ask no better interpreter. From saddest wail of sorrow to sweetest strain of consolation—from the dirge of the loved and lost to the psalm of the jubilant victor—each shade of human passion, each tender message of divine encouragement, take form and color in succession, under the magic of that old man's touch. Thus, sometimes borrowing the song of other singers, sometimes wandering into quaint Æolian harmonies, the spontaneous overflow of his own rare genius, Michael Fray sat, and made music, charming his sorrows to temporary sleep.

Time crept on, but the player heeded it not, till the heavy bell in the tower above his head boomed forth the hour of midnight and recalled him to reality again. With two or three wailing minor chords he brought his weird improvisation to an end.

"Dear me," he said, with a heavy sigh, "Christmas again! Christmas again! How many times, I wonder? Each time I think, 'Well, this will be the last;' and yet Christmas comes again and finds me here still, all alone. Dear, dear! First, poor Dick; and then my darling Alice and little Nell—all gone! Young and bright and merry—all taken! And here am I—old, sad and friendless—and yet I live on, live on! Well, I suppose God knows best!" While thus thinking aloud, the old man was apparently searching for something among his music-books, and now produced an ancient page of manuscript, worn almost to fragments, but pasted, for preservation, on a piece of paper of later date. "Yes, here it is; poor Dick's Christmas song. What a sweet voice he had, dear boy! If he had only lived—but there! I'm murmuring again. God's will be done!"

He placed the music on the desk before him, and, after a moment's pause, began, in tender flute-like tones, to play the melody, at the same time crooning the words in a feeble voice. He played one verse of the song, then stopped and drew his sleeve across his eyes. The sense of his desolation appeared to come anew upon him; he seemed to shrink down, doubly old, doubly feeble, doubly forsaken—when, lo! a marvel! Suddenly from the lonely street without, in that chill midnight, came the sound of a violin, and a sweet young voice singing the self-same tender air—the song written by his dead-and-gone brother forty years before.

The effect on Michael Fray was electrical. For a moment he staggered, but caught at the keyboard before him, and held it with a convulsive grasp.

"Am I dreaming? or are my senses leaving me? Poor Dick's Christmas carol; and I could almost swear the voice is my own lost Nellie's. Can this be death at last? and are the angels welcoming me home with the song I have loved so dearly? No, surely; either I am going mad, or that is a real living voice! But whose—whose? Heaven help me to find out!" And with his whole frame quivering with excitement—without pausing even to close the organ or to extinguish the flickering candle—the old man groped his way down the narrow winding stair which led to the street, and, hurriedly closing the door behind him, stepped forth bareheaded into the snowy street.

CHAPTER II.

For some hours before Michael Fray was startled, as we have related, by the mysterious echo of his brother's song, an old man and a young girl had been making their way citywards from the southeastern side of London. Both walked wearily, as though they had tramped from a long distance; and once or twice the young girl wiped away a tear, though she strove hard to hide it from her companion, and forced herself to speak with a cheerfulness in strange contrast with her sunken cheeks and footsore gait. Every now and then, in passing through the more frequented streets, they would pause; and the man, who carried a violin, would strike up some old ballad tune with a vigor and power of execution which even his frost-nipped fingers and weary limbs could not wholly destroy; while the girl, with a sweet though very sad voice, accompanied him with the appropriate words. But their attempts were miserably unproductive. In such bitter weather, few who could help it would stay away from their warm firesides; and those whom necessity kept out of doors seemed only bent on dispatching their several tasks, and to have no time or thought to expend on a couple of wandering tramps singing by the roadside. Still they toiled on, every now and then making a fresh "pitch" at some likely corner, only too often ordered "to move on" by a stern policeman. As they drew nearer to the City, and the hour grew later, the passers by became fewer and farther between, and the poor wanderers felt that it was idle even to seek for charity in those deserted silent streets. At last the old man stopped and groaned aloud.

"What is it, grandfather, dear? Don't give in now, when we have come so far. Lean on me—do; I'm hardly tired at all; and I daresay we shall do better to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" said the old man bitterly; "to-morrow it will be too late. I don't mind hunger, and I don't mind cold; but the shame of it, the disgrace—after having struggled against it all these years—to come to the work-house at last! It isn't for myself I mind—beggars mustn't be choosers; and I dare say better men than I have slept in a casual ward—but you, my tender little Lily. The thought breaks my heart!—it kills me!" And the old man sobbed aloud.

"Dear grandfather, you are always thinking of me, and never of yourself. What does it matter after all? it's only the name of the thing. I'm sure I don't mind it one bit"—the shudder of horror which passed over the girl's frame gave the lie to this pious falsehood; "I daresay it is not so very bad, and after all, something may happen to prevent it even now."

"What can happen, short of a miracle, in these deserted streets?"

"Well, let us hope for the miracle then, dear. God has never quite deserted us in our deepest troubles, and I don't believe He will forsake us now."

As she spoke she drew her thin shawl more closely round her, shivering in spite of herself under the cold blast, which seemed to receive no check from her scanty coverings. Again the pair crept on, and passing beneath the lofty wall of St. Winifred's church, stood beneath it for a temporary shelter from the driving wind and snow. While so standing they caught the faint sounds of the organ solemnly pealing within.

"Noble music," said the old man, as

the final chords died away; "noble music, and a soul in the playing. That man, whoever he may be, should have a generous heart."

"Hush, grandfather," said the girl; "he is beginning to play again."

Scarcely had the music commenced, however, than the pair gazed at each other in breathless surprise.

"Lily, darling, do you hear what he is playing?" said the old man, in an excited whisper.

"A strange coincidence," the girl replied.

"Strange! it is more than strange! Lily, darling, who could play that song?"

The melody came to an end, and all was silence. There was a moment's pause, and then, as if by a common impulse, the old man drew his bow across the strings, and the girl's sweet voice caroled forth the second verse of the song. Scarcely had they ended, when a door opened at the foot of the church tower just beside them, and Michael Fray, bareheaded, with his scanty locks blown about by the winter wind, stood before them. He hurried forward, and then stood still, shamefaced, bewildered. The song had called up the vision of a gallant young sailor, full of life and health, as Michael had seen his brother for the last time on the day when he sailed on his fatal voyage. He had hurried forth forgetting the years that had passed, full of tender memories of happy boyish days, to find, alas, only a couple of wandering beggars, singing for bread.

"I beg your pardon," he said, striving vainly to master his emotion; "you sang a song just now which—which—a song which was a favorite of a dear friend of mine many years ago. Will you—will you tell me where you got it?"

"By the best of all titles, sir," the old fiddler answered, drawing himself up with a touch of artistic pride; "I wrote it myself, words and music both."

"Nay, sir," said Michael sternly, "you rob the dead. A dearly-loved brother of mine wrote that song forty years ago."

"Well, upon my word!" said the old fiddler, waxing wroth—"then your brother must have stolen it from me! What might that precious brother's name be, pray?"

"An honest name, a name I am proud to speak," said Michael, firing up in his turn; "his name was Richard Fray."

The old street musician staggered as if he had received a blow.

"What!" he exclaimed, peering eagerly into the other's face; "then you are my brother Michael, for I am Richard Fray!"

Half an hour later, and the brothers so long parted, so strangely brought together, were seated round a roaring fire in Michael Fray's quaint three-cornered parlor. Michael's stores had been ransacked for warm dry clothing for the wanderers. Drawers long closed, yielding when opened a sweet scent of lavender, and containing homely skirts and bodices, kept still in loving memory of little Nell, gave up their treasures for Lily's benefit, and Richard Fray's snow-sodden clothes were replaced by Michael's choicest coat and softest slippers. The wanderer had done full justice to a plentiful meal, and a jug of fragrant punch now steamed upon the hob, and was laid under frequent contributions, while Richard Fray told the story of thirty years' wandering, and the brothers found how it had come to pass that, each thinking the other dead, they had lived their lives, and married, and buried their dear ones, being sometimes but a few miles apart, and yet as distant as though severed by the grim Divider himself. And Lily sat on a cushion at her grandfather's feet, a picture of quiet happiness, and sang sweet songs to please the two old men, while Michael lovingly traced in her soft features fanciful likenesses to his lost Nelly, the strange similarity of the sweet voice aiding the tender illusion. And surely no happier family party was gathered together in all England on that Christmas-tide, than the little group round Michael Fray's quiet fireside.—Selected.

CHRISTMAS-DAY.

Everybody concurs in keeping the festival of Christmas. Even those who feel constrained to express a doubt as to whether the true date of the nativity is known are glad to join in keeping the day under protest. They do not question the fact of the Lord's birth or their own rejoicing in it. It is simply a point of scholarly propriety, which duly appeared; they are as glad as the undoubted child which sings its carol in the full faith of its simple and unsophisticated heart.

And those who keep the day, whatever their particular professions of belief, all admit the fact of the Lord's humanity. It is from that cradle-manger of Bethlehem that all who profess and call themselves Christians can set out. They have one undisputed fact. Whosoever receives the Gospels as they are (for with

the denier, in whole or in part, of the New Testament there can be no reasoning) must start from this story of the Divine birth. It is upon the perfect human nature of the Lord that all the rest of the Scripture story turns. It is the key and explanation of the rest. All wonder ceases, all comprehension fails, all sympathy is at an end, if the Arian belief is once allowed; because that annihilates the humanity.

But take the doctrine of this day in any light that one will, it is full of the thought of unity. Ere the dawning the song of peace and good-will is heard in heaven.

The appeal of the helpless Babe and virgin mother is made to all the noblest instincts of the human heart. It is an appeal which is independent of race or clime or date. It is an ever-present fact on which all life of man upon earth is built.—Churchman.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

FAITH BERNARD.

Listen to the Christmas chimes,
To their tale of olden times,
Ringing out the sacred story
Of the Lord of light and glory;
Sweet the melody they swell,
Welcome news to man they tell:
Raise your happy voices high,
Join the chorus of the sky.

Listen to the Christmas chimes,
Pealing out in tuneful rhymes;
Heralds of a bright to-morrow,
Banishing the night of sorrow;
All the shadows flee away
With the coming of this day:
Peace and joy its dawn foretells,
Jubilant with Christmas bells!

Listen to the Christmas chimes,
Echoing through distant climes,
Waking those in heathen blindness
To behold God's loving-kindness
In the gift of His dear Son,
Him who died for every one:
Sing aloud to Christ your King,
Jesus did salvation bring.

Listen to the Christmas chimes,
Blessed notes of gospel times,
When the light of truth is burning,
Men from sin and folly turning;
Fill His courts with melody
On this day of jubilee:
Lend your voice to swell the song,
Love and praise to Christ belong.

A SAD FACT.

It is a sad fact that, in this country, the beautiful confidence between fathers, mothers, and children, which is the golden chain of family life, is a very rare tribute. A mother is the best guide for a daughter and a father for his son; but the self-reliance of young American manhood generally puts guidance on the part of a father out of the question. It is bad enough to see fathers and sons divided in their ways and separated from each other by invisible barriers; but in the case of mothers and daughters it is most deplorable. It is safe to say that no girl who confides in her mother can go astray. Poor Marguerite would have resisted both Faust and Mephistopheles had she a mother; and in all the deplorable cases of dereliction of duty the details of which fill the papers, the silence of the daughter laid the first stone in the shameful work. Young women to-day are "engaged" and "disengaged" according to their fancy. In matrimonial questions the opinions and advice of parents are quietly "shelved." A mother who presumes to have an opinion about the eligibility of her daughter's suitor is considered "queer" and interfering.

A MARRIAGE PROCESSION.—NAZARETH.

While we were resting under some olive-trees to-day, a marriage procession passed us. It was led by about fifty men in their best clothes, well-mounted and armed, who were escorting a bride home. Some of these men played upon curious musical instruments. In their midst sat the bride, astride upon a white caparisoned horse, led by a man in flowing robes. Her wonderful garments were stiff with embroidery, and she was laden with magnificent jewels. She wore the usual jacket, skirt, tunic, fall, and loose trousers, and was attended by four very ugly old hags as bridesmaids, who were nearly as smart as herself. But these antique damsels (or dames) were distinguished by extraordinary head-dresses, composed of rolls of silver coins about the size of a florin, piled up like the money on a money-changer's counter, and arranged round the front of a sort of cap, something of the shape of a great sausage. The procession included a host of women and children, and the rear was brought up by a solitary camel, bearing a huge scarlet and green box aloft, which box contained the bride's trousseau. The journey was a long one, and to beguile the tedium they sang songs and played upon their queer musical instruments, and every time they came to ever so small a plateau beside the rocky path, the men broke out of the order of march and held a sort of mini-

ature tournament, performing all sorts of intricate evolutions. They would tilt at one another with their long lances, and fire off their long guns. Now and then one of them would detach himself from the rest, and really seem to fly up the steep mountain side, his horse clambering over the rocks, and all the others rushing after him in hot pursuit, shouting and shrieking at the top of their voices.—Fraser's Magazine.

CHRISTMAS.

Have you ever thought, what a significance there is in the fact that the birth of Christ is an event so important that, after the lapse of nearly 2,000 years, upon every recurring anniversary, it stirs the whole civilized world with peculiar joy? What other birth upon our planet can do this? Aye, the birth of the planet itself is not an event so significant; and if the day of its completion and dedication to be the habitation of man could be definitely fixed, the populations that move upon and enjoy it would feel no equal rapture upon the day that should mark its nativity. The birth of Christ is a fact of grander significance than any that has transpired in the history of the world, perhaps than any that has ever taken place in the government of God. For us it was the dawn of hope out of the darkness of universal despair; the breaking forth of a light more glorious than that which flooded chaos when God said: "Let there be light," for "the Sun of Righteousness" hath, for the broken and fallen millions of earth, a "healing in His beams." His coming marks the beginning of an era of "Peace on earth and good-will to men." How glorious is His advent. Let Him arise in your heart.

More sweet He comes than morning light
Upon the golden hills;
And sweeter than the dew of night,
Which, with a silent freshness bright,
The glittering landscape fills.

He comes to spread a gladsome ray
Wherever night may be;
To usher in an endless day,
And gird the islands far away
With light as with the sea.

Arise, Thou glorious light divine,
Drive earth's long night away;
Arise, upon the nations shine,
And shine upon this soul of mine,
Unto the perfect day.

—Lutheran Chimes.

Useful Hints and Recipes.

BOSTON BREAD.—Three pounds flour, half-pint pot yeast, one-fourth poundlard, four eggs, one tablespoon brown sugar, a little salt.

Old boot-tops, cut into pieces the right size and lined, make excellent iron-holders. The leather keeps all heat away from the hand.

In boiling dumplings of any kind, put them in the water one at a time. If they are put in together, they will mix with each other.

FRUIT PUDDING.—Stew currants, or any small fruit, fresh or dried, with sugar to taste, and pour hot over thin slices of buttered baker's bread with crust off, making alternate layers of fruit and bread. Serve warm, with rich, hot sauce.

SWEET GREEN TOMATO PICKLES.—Wash, remove any imperfections, weigh out eight pounds, chop fine, add four pounds of white or light brown sugar; boil slowly for three hours, then add a quart of vinegar and a dessertspoonful each of ground cinnamon and cloves. Boil fifteen or twenty minutes longer, and when cool, put into bottles or jars.

OAT MEAL PREPARATION.—Oat meal is very nice prepared the following way: Put a piece of butter the size of a hickory nut and a teaspoon of salt in three pints of boiling water, then add one half pint of oatmeal; for ten minutes let it boil fast, stirring frequently, then place it over a saucepan of boiling water, to continue cooking slowly for about half an hour. When over the water it will only need stirring occasionally.

HINTS ON COOKING POULTRY.—Steaming is preferable to boiling for tough fowls. Remove the *threads* before sending roast fowls to the table. In winter kill the poultry three days to a week before cooking. Poultry and game are less nutritious, but more digestible than other meats. Singe with alcohol instead of paper—a teaspoonful is sufficient for either turkey or chicken. Remember, much of the skill of cooking poultry in the best manner depends upon basting faithfully. To give roast birds a frothy appearance, dredge, just before they are done, with flour and baste liberally with melted butter. When onions are added to stuffing, chop them so fine that in eating the mixture one does not detect their presence by biting in a piece. Ladies doing their marketing will do well to remember that young poultry may be told by the tip of the breast bone being soft, and easily bent between the fingers, and when fresh by its bright full eye, pliant feet and soft moist skin.

Miscellaneous.

CHRISTMAS.

FROM THE SPANISH.

BY WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

No trumpet blast profaned
The day on which the Prince of peace was born;
No bloody streamlet stained
Earth's silver rivers on that sacred morn;
But o'er the peaceful plain
The war-horse drew the peasant's loaded wain.

The soldier had laid by
His sword, and stripped the corslet from his breast,
And hung his helm on high,
The sparrow's winter home and summer nest;
And with the same strong hand
That flung the barbed spear, he tilled the land.

Oh time for which we yearn!
Oh Sabbath of the nations, long foretold!
Season of peace, return!
Like a late summer when the year grows old;
When its sweet, sunny days
Steep mead and mountain side in golden haze.

For now two rival kings
Flaunt o'er our bleeding land their hostile flags,
And every morning brings
The hovering vulture from the mountain crags
To where the battle plain
Is strewn with dead, the youth and flower of Spain.

Christ is not come while yet
O'er half the earth the threat of battle lowers,
And our own fields are wet,
Beneath the battle-cloud, with crimson showers—
The life-blood of the slain,
Poured out where thousands die that one may reign.

Yet soon, o'er half the earth,
In every temple, crowds shall kneel again
To celebrate His birth
Who brought the message of good-will to men;
And bursts of joyous song
Shall shake the roof above the prostrate throng.

Christ is not come while there
The men of blood, whose crimes affront the skies,
Kneel down in act of prayer,
Amid the joyous strains, and, when they rise,
Go forth, with sword and flame,
To waste the land in His most holy name.

Oh when the day shall break
O'er realms unlearned in warfare's cruel arts,
And all their millions wake
To tasks of peaceful hands and loving hearts,
On such a blessed morn
Well may the nations say that Christ is born.

A COFFEE-FIELD IN BRAZIL.

In Southern Brazil, a coffee-field seldom lasts more than thirty years. The plantations are made on the fertile hill-sides, where the forest has been growing thick and strong. But the soil here is never deep—six or eight inches of mold at the utmost. In the tropics there are no long Winters with mats of dead vegetable matter rotting under the snow. The leaves fall singly, and dry up until they break into dust; logs and decaying branches in the shady woods are carried away by white ants and beetles; hence the model bed increases very slowly; in twenty-five or thirty years, the strong-growing coffee-trees eat it all up. Most planters simply cut down the forest, and leave the trees to dry in the sun for six or eight weeks, when they are burned. S—, more provident, lets the logs rot where they lie, which they do in a year or two; in the open sunlight they are saved from insects, and the ground receives a large accession to its strength.

Back of the house there are two yards or small fields—four acres, perhaps, together. The ground is covered with earthen pots set close together, only leaving little paths at intervals. Each of the 200,000 pots contains a thriving young coffee-plant. The ground forms a gentle slope, and water is constantly running over it, so that it is always soaked. The pots, through orifices at the bottoms, draw up enough of this water to keep the roots moistened. The young plants are protected from the sun by mat screens stretched on poles above the ground.

This is a costly system. Most of the planters take root shoots at random from the old fields, and set them at once into unprepared ground. Sr. S—'s experiment has cost him probably \$20,000; the pots alone cost \$11,000. But he will make at least \$50,000 by the operation. In the first place, he gains a good year in the start that he gives to these young plants. Then they are not put back in the transplanting; the pots are simply inverted, and the roots come out with the earth. They are set into mold or compost, which has been prepared in deep holes. The tender rootlets catch hold of this at once, and in a day or two the plant is growing as well as ever.

The nurslings come from selected seeds of half a dozen varieties. Sr. S— has them planted at first in small pots. A dozen slaves are engaged transplanting the six-inch high shoots to larger pots. Little tired-looking children carry them about on their shoulders, working on as steadily as the old ones, for they are well trained. Sr. S— wants to make his plants last fifty years, so he is careful and tender with them. The little blacks

will be free in 1892, so his policy is to get as much work as possible from them while he can.

The plants are set in rows, about ten feet apart. They grow, and thrive, and are happy, on the hill-side. Warm sunshine caresses the leaves; generous rains feed the tender roots; the ground is kept free from intruding weeds and bushes, and the planter waits for his harvest. After four years, the trees are six feet high and begin to bear. By the sixth year, the crops are very large—three or even four pounds per tree at times. Meanwhile, corn and mandioca are planted between the rows. Often in a new plantation the expenses are nearly covered by these subsidiary crops.

In the month of November only a few of the slaves are in the new fields. November is the principal gathering month, and almost the whole force must be at work in the bearing orchards. From sunrise to sunset, men, women and children are gathering the berries in baskets, working silently and steadily under the overseer's eye. Every day, each slave gathers on the average berries enough to produce fifty pounds of dried coffee. The pickings are collected in carts and brought to the mill-house, where the seeds must be prepared for the market.—*Scribner for December.*

SEEDS.

At the last meeting of the British Association, Sir John Lubbock read an interesting paper on seeds. He commenced by calling attention to the difference presented by seeds, some being large, some small, some covered with hooks, some provided with hairs, some smooth, some sticky, etc. He gave the reason of these peculiarities, and then spoke of the modes of dispersion, by means of which seeds secured a sort of natural rotation of crops, and in other cases were enabled to rectify their frontiers. Some plants actually threw their seeds, some were transported by the wind, and many were provided with a wing which caught the wind. Dispersion was also effected by the agency of animals. This means was divided into two classes, where seeds adhered to animals by hooks, and where the same purpose was effected by sticky glands. The next point touched upon was, that seeds found themselves in spots suitable for growth. Most seeds germinated on the ground, but there were instances, as the mistletoe, where they were parasitic on trees. Such seeds were embedded in a viscid substance, so that if dropped by a bird on a bough they adhered to it. In some cases plants buried their own seeds, and in other instances the seeds buried themselves, the means by which these processes were effected being fully explained by Sir John, who, in conclusion, called attention to mimicking seeds, such as the scorpionus, the pods of which did not open, but looked so exactly like worms that birds were induced to peck at them and thus free the seeds. That this was the purpose of the resemblance he would not assert, but he threw it out as a matter for consideration.—*Scientific American.*

THE HILDESHEIM FIND.

In the year 1868 some Prussian soldiers, who were digging the ground at Hildesheim for a German military purpose, came upon a number of silver vessels—cups, vases, dishes, a tray, parts of a candelabrum, and other articles of table furniture of the most elegant description. Although the general character of the workmanship is the same throughout, they do not appear to all belong to the same period, the oldest dating, perhaps, from the first century, and other pieces a century or two later. At first the real historic value of the treasure was hardly appreciated, but when examination showed them to belong to a high period of Roman art-work in metal, the importance of the discovery was realized, and after being partially restored they were lodged in the Museum of Berlin, where they now rest.

This "Treasure of Hildesheim," as it is called, numbers thirty pieces, and the conjectures as to their original ownership have been various. Being evidently the work of master Roman smiths, it is difficult to account for their having been taken so far away from the Imperial City, although the theory has been advanced that they may have been a part of the treasure of some great religious house to which they had been contributed, or, again, that they may have belonged to some Roman diplomat travelling on a mission into Germany, or the camp equipage of a general in command of troops, from either of whom they might have been plundered and then concealed and the record of them lost or in time forgotten. But at all events they constitute a valuable accession to art-work; and how or why they were transported to Hildesheim, is a matter of comparatively

little importance to us. The most beautiful piece is the one we have illustrated here, a bowl with flower ornament on the outside presenting an appearance from the side not unlike a water-lily, and enriched within with a splendid figure of Minerva and a fringe formed of modifications of the Grecian honeysuckle. All the pieces of the treasure have been reproduced by Messrs. Christoffle & Co., of Paris, who made the most admirable *fac similes* of these interesting objects.—*National Repository.*

MILITARY SKATERS.

The corps of skaters, a force peculiar to the Norwegian army, has been lately reorganized, and consists now of five companies, each of 110 men, which in time of war can be reinforced by calling in 270 skaters belonging to the landwehr. The men of this corps are armed with rifles, and can be maneuvered upon ice or over the snow-fields of the mountains with a rapidity equal to that of the best trained cavalry. The skates they use are admirably adapted for travelling over rough and broken ice or frozen snow, being six inches broad and between nine and ten inches long. In ascending steep slopes the men take a zigzag course, tacking up the mountain side as a ship does against a head wind. As an instance of the speed at which they can go, it is mentioned that last winter a messenger dispatched from Roeraas at three o'clock in the morning, arrived at Drontheim at 9-30 in the evening of the same day, having, consequently, accomplished 120 miles in eighteen and a half hours. It must be added, however, that Roeraas lies some 2,000 feet higher than Drontheim, so that the course of the skater was down hill the whole way. On the return journey the same man took fifty-four hours to reach Roeraas from Drontheim, but the route he took led him over very rough and broken snow-fields, which rendered great caution and slow skating necessary.

A WALLED LAKE.

One of the wonders of Iowa is the "Walled Lake," about one hundred and fifty miles west of Dubuque city. The lake is from two to three feet higher than the earth's surface. In some places the wall is ten feet high, fifteen feet wide at the bottom and five feet on the top.

Another fact is the absence of the stones used in construction, the whole of them varying in weight from three tons down to one hundred pounds. There is an abundance of stones in Wright county, but surrounding the lake to the extent of five or ten miles there are none. No one can form an idea as to the means employed to bring them to the spot, or who constructed it. Around the entire lake is a belt of woodland half a mile in length, composed of oak; with this exception the country is a rolling prairie. The trees must have been planted here at the time of the building of the wall. In the Spring of the year 1836 there was a great storm, and the ice on the lake broke the wall in several places, and the farmers in the vicinity were obliged to repair the damages to prevent inundation. The lake occupies a ground surface of two thousand eight hundred acres; depth of water as great as twenty-one feet. The water is clear and cold; soil sandy and loamy. It is singular that no one has been able to ascertain where the water comes from nor where it goes, yet it is always clear and fresh.—*Methodist.*

THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY.

There is scarcely a bit of needle-work in the world more curious, and even more pathetic, in its record of hopes and triumphs than that kept in the Cathedral of Bayeux, France, and known there as the Toile de St. Jean, and among English-speaking people as the Bayeux Tapestry. It is a strip fully two hundred feet long, and about half a yard wide, and was worked by Matilda, Queen of William the Conqueror, to celebrate his victory over the English at Hastings.

It begins with Harold's visit to Normandy, his extorted oath, King Edward's death, the comet in the sky, and the terrified peasants gazing at it with wide-open mouths and eyes, and suddenly stops unfinished in the midst of the battle of Hastings. The conception of many of the scenes is very spirited, though the drawing is rude and the coloring very droll, the horses being alternately blue and red, while the off legs are always of a different color from the others. Her castles and houses are all colors of the rainbow, and are not so large as the people standing beside them, but there is spirit in every figure and expression in every face.

The tapestry is edged with a narrow border above and below, worked with subjects from Phædrus's fables, upon whose translation Henry Beauclerc's, Matilda's fourth son, reputation for

scholarship is chiefly based. The tapestry was given to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and brother of William, by Matilda, for his Cathedral, and there it hung, unknown and forgotten, till Napoleon I. had it taken out and exhibited from town to town, to stimulate modern Normans to arise and conquer England, as their fathers had done.

The work breaks off, as before said, in the middle of the battle, and no woman, I think, could look at it without wondering why it should have ended so abruptly, whether grief at her husband's fury against their first-born son, or the repose of illness and death, stayed the cunning of brain and fingers. We wonder too, what kind of a woman she was, how she occupied her days, and whether she had a real tender wife-like love for that strong hero-husband who won her in such strange fashion. And lest some reader should have forgotten that story, let us repeat it here. Matilda was the daughter of Baldwin, Count of Flanders, and William sued seven years for her love and her hand, but in vain. One evening, at twilight, as she was returning from church through the streets of Burges, her persistent lover went up to her, knocked her from her horse into the gutter, and beat her severely. Subdued by this rough courtship she made no further resistance; they were married soon after, and tradition says, they lived in love and felicity to the end.

A RUSSIAN LEGEND.

The Russian peasantry have a curious tradition. It is that an old woman, the Baboushka, was at work in her house when the wise men from the East passed on their way to find the Christ-child. "Come with us," they said, "we have seen his star in the East and go to worship him." "I will come, but not now," she answered; "I have my house to set in order; when that is done I will follow and find him." But when her work was done the three kings had passed on their way across the desert and the star shone no more in the darkened heavens. She never saw the Christ-child, but she is living and searching for him still. For his sake she takes care of all his children. It is she who in Russian and Italian houses is believed to fill the stockings and dress the tree on Christmas morn. The children are awakened by the cry of "Behold the Baboushka!" and spring up hoping to see her before she vanishes out of the window. She fancies, the tradition goes, that in each poor little one whom she warms and feeds she may find the Christ-child, whom she neglected ages ago, but is doomed to eternal disappointment.—*Selected.*

Selections.

From all the hard judgments of self-complacent beneficence:—Good Lord deliver us!

As the best writers are the most candid judges of the writings of others, so the best lives are the most charitable, in the judgment they form of their neighbors.

Idleness is the bane of body and mind; the nurse of naughtiness; the step-mother of deception; one of the seven deadly sins; the cushion upon which the devil chiefly reposes.—*Burton.*

One of the saddest things about human nature is that a man may guide others in the path of life, without walking in it himself; that he may be a pilot and yet a castaway.—*Julius Hare.*

Trouble must have great possibilities of blessing in it, or it would not be so common in God's world. Surely we need not dread it so, when it brings in one hand the peaceable fruit of righteousness, and in the other the joys of consolation for so many sorrowing souls.

The name of Jesus is not only light, but also food; it is likewise oil, without which all the food of the soul is dry; it is salt, unseasoned by which, whatever is presented to us is insipid; it is honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, joy in the heart, medicine to the soul; and there are no charms in any discourse in which His name is not heard.

How often, when we have spread anything before the Lord, and left it with Him, and have almost given up hoping for the answer we want, He just gives it because our minds have been set more on Him than the object. We are able to bear the blessing He has taken His own time to prepare the heart for it, and it will now bring us closer to Him from very joy and thankfulness!

Nor in the heat of pain and strife
Think God hath cast thee off unheard;
Nor that the man whose prosperous life
Thou enviest, is of Him preferred;
Time passes, and much change doth bring,
And sets a bound to everything.

Sing, pray, and swerve not from His ways,
But do thine own part faithfully;
Trust His rich promises of grace;
So shall it be fulfilled in thee;
God never yet forsook in need
The soul that trusted Him indeed.

—*From the German.*

I seldom come to the conclusion of a week but my mind is struck with the rapidity with which it has flown. Quickly has it been told up, but it can never be told again. I am hastening toward eternity as fast as time can carry. Oh! how foolish to be engrossed by the world when I have a precious soul so worthy of my deep regard! If the thought of dying were oftener before us, sinful things would lose their deceitful influence.—*Rowland Hill.*

Science and Art.

There was an interesting sale of old furniture and curiosities three weeks ago at a picturesque villa near Genoa. The gem of the collection was a bronze Mercury, rather under life size, of the sixteenth century, a reproduction of which is in the Museum of the Louvre. This is attributed by some to Benvenuto Cellini, and it was purchased for \$20,000 for a museum in Germany. A picture by Meissotier, about fifteen inches by ten inches, a single figure of a cavalier playing a guitar, fetched \$5,100; a white elephant in Dresden china, bearing a clock, went for \$3,400; a Salvator Rosa sold for \$3,000, and two very handsome carved oak cabinets, panels and figures of old carving, put together a perfect match, brought \$1,800. Among the curiosities was an old Venetian spinet with inscriptions, and a gorgeous sedan chair, formerly used by the Dukes of Parma.

A NEW KNITTING LOOM.—A new loom has recently been brought out in England, which has excited much interest among the manufacturers of textile fabrics. It is a loom for knitting on what is claimed to be an entirely new principle. The yarn, which is drawn direct from 432 cops, is arranged over the width required like a warp for the ordinary power loom, and by a simple contrivance the whole of the threads are shifted to such an angle that the needles are enabled to catch each thread at the same instant, thus knitting the entire width at one revolution. The loom occupies less space, and requires less than half the power necessary for the power-loom now in use. It makes from twelve to fifteen inches of closely-knitted fabric in one minute. In two hours and twenty minutes, including stoppages, forty-eight and a half yards, seventy-two inches wide, can be produced. The fabric produced has been pronounced by competent judges to be superior in strength and durability to the ordinary woven cloth. Each stitch or loop being locked, the cloth will not unravel. A variety of designs has been produced. Any mixture and variety of coloring can be introduced, and the selvages are perfect, and may be fancy or plain, as required. The loom has been tested with tender yarns and found to work satisfactorily.

PALESTINE POTTERY.—The Biblical descriptions of pottery are singularly applicable to the process of manufacture. Now, in this 19th century, the potter sits at his frame and turns the wheel with his foot. Or, as we read in the Apocrypha: "So doth the potter, sitting at his work and turning the wheel about with his feet; he fashioneth the clay with his arm." The potter had a heap of the prepared clay near him and a pot of water by his side. Taking a lump in his hand, he placed it on top of the wheel, which revolves horizontally, and smoothed it into a low cone, like the upper end of a sugar-loaf; then thrusting his thumb into the top of it, he opened a hole down through the center, and this he constantly widened by pressing the edges of the revolving cone between his hands. As it enlarged and became thinner, he gave it whatever shape he pleased with the utmost ease and expedition. It is evident, from numerous expressions in the Bible, that the potter's vessel was the synonym of utter fragility; and to say, as David does, that Zion's king would dash his enemies in pieces like a potter's vessel, was to threaten with ruinous and remediless destruction. We, who are used to strong stoneware of considerable value, can scarcely appreciate some of these Biblical references, but for Palestine they are still as appropriate and forcible as ever. Arab jars are so thin and frail that they are literally dashed to shivers by the slightest stroke. Water jars are often broken by merely putting them down on the floor; and the servant frequently returns from the fountain empty-handed, having had all his jars smashed to atoms by some irregular behaviour of the donkey.—*Harper's for December.*

Personal.

It is stated that Rev. Joseph Cook is to be invited to deliver a series of lectures in Exeter Hall and Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle in London.

John Bright recommends the Irish members of Parliament to unite with the Liberal party; otherwise, he thinks the future of both countries doubtful.

J. S. Gittings, who died at his residence in Baltimore on the 8th inst., in his 82d year, was the largest property holder in the city. He is said to have built about 1200 houses, and his estate is estimated at about \$3,000,000, being probably, with one exception, the wealthiest man in Baltimore. He had been President of the Chesapeake Bank for the last 44 years.

The Sultan of Morocco is a good Mahometan, if not a good ruler. He lies ill at Fez from the effects of poison administered in his food, and has sent a faithful dervish to Mecca with a bag of gold to endeavor to procure the loan of the broom with which the Sacred Kaaba is swept. The dervish is also instructed to bring back some pieces of the cloth which covers the holy stone. If the Sultan can get the broom to hang up in his bed-room, and the bits of cloth to wear on his person as amulets, he thinks his restoration to health will certainly follow.

Books and Periodicals.

THE FLOWER MISSION AND WHAT GREW OUT OF IT. By Kate Neely Hill, author of "Ellie Randolph," etc., etc. Philadelphia: Sunday-school Union, No. 1122 Chestnut street; New York: 8 & 10 Bible House, Astor Place; Chicago: 73 Randolph street. Pp. 224.

A very neat volume, suitable for a cheap Christmas present or a Sunday-school library. The lessons it teaches are good.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE. No. 1853, December 20, 1879. Contents.—The History of Money, *Nineteenth Century*; He that will not when he may. By Mrs. Olliphant. Part V. *Advance Sheets*; Galileo and the Application of Mathematics and Physics. Part II. *Nature*; Adam and Eve. By the author of "Dorothy Fox," *Advance Sheets*; An American Princess. *Blackwood's Magazine*; History and Politics. By Professor Seeley, *Macmillan's Magazine*; The Criminal Code of the Jews. Part III. *Pall Mall Gazette*; Madame de Remusat's Memoirs. *Athenaeum*; Trappers and the Fur-Traders, *Saturday Review*; Certain Animal Poisons, *Nature*. POETRY.—A Life's Love. A Year Ago. By the Stream. "Every Morn." *Miscellany*. Published every Saturday by Littell & Co., Boston.

The Messenger.

REV. P. S. DAVIS, D. D., EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.
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 Rev. A. R. KREMER, } Synodical Editors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS. Communications on practical subjects and items of intelligence relating to the Church, are solicited. Persons who forward communications should not write anything pertaining to the business of the office on the back of their communications, but on a separate slip—or, if on the same sheet, in such a way, that it can be separated from the communication, without affecting it.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the return of unaccepted manuscripts.
 For Terms, see First page.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1879.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS.

Every one, whose eyes are open to what is going on around him, must notice that Christmas is more universally observed than it was some years ago. It has not for centuries fallen short of some kind of recognition as a holiday, but its true significance seemed to be lost. Now, men are asking, "What does it mean?" And the answer to be satisfactory cannot stop on this side of the fact, that it celebrates the Incarnation of the God. This is the world-fact, that marked the coming of the Father, into the service of our humanity.

There is a world-consciousness that we cannot do without this; that if we are rescued at all, it must be by what Wilberforce calls an "external Saviour,"—one coming from beyond and above the order of our whole fallen life.

All men stand in need of this Personal Redeemer, whether they fully realize it or not; and His advent is the only ground of hope. It looks to historical deliverance from sin, through His sacrifice and resurrection. No one less than the Almighty God could effect this, and even He found it necessary to take upon Him our nature. It is no wonder then that His birth of a virgin should attract men.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS.

In order to the full enjoyment of Christmas, we must receive Jesus with the spirit in which He came. It is wondrous in this connection to think of Him as a "little child." He sanctified infancy, and perfected praise out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. The festival of His birth is marked by the glory it imparts to childhood, as if there were a mysterious influence, going out from His Person in the manger.

But the coming of Christ was characterized above all by humility, which is not a mere negative quality, but a positive grace. He emptied Himself of His glory; placed Himself in the most disadvantageous circumstances, as far as appearances were concerned, became poor that we through His poverty might be made rich, and we have learned nothing until we have learned to be last of all, to take the lowest place and believe that is the fittest place for us. Then, and then only, will we be prepared for the exaltation He brings us.

LAST WEEK'S OVATION.

Since the Centennial Exhibition, there has been no such display of bunting as we had in Philadelphia last week, at the reception given to General Grant. As before, the city in its outward appearance, reminded us of a garden of tulips. It is conceded, that no one day during the year 1876, witnessed such a large procession as we had on the 16th inst. It is estimated that 50,000 people were on the march, to say nothing of the great cloud of witnesses that looked upon the scene from the side-walks. It took the procession six hours to pass a given point, and long after those in the lead of it had disbanded and gone into festivities, some of the divisions were waiting to fall into line and pass over the route that had been marked out. The vast concourse was made up of military, civic, and political organizations, together with representatives of the industries of this big manufacturing town. Of this full accounts have been given in the city dailies, which have vied in going into particulars, one saying that General Grant's silk hat was "new," while others averred that it looked "seedy."

It is useless to say that all this does not teach a lesson. During all the day, we were impressed with what some one has called the disposition of men to gravitate towards mighty personalities, and look for deliverers. This after all, grounds itself in a consciousness of need, upon which the desire for Messiah is based. Often men fall short of this and then we have what Carlyle denominates Hero-worship; or rejecting the Christ of God, they fall a prey to all the delusions of Anti-Christ. For our lost and ruined humanity, there is but one "Deliverer," and people everywhere and always will find their true salvation in Him. There is but one Central Person, around whom all the helpers of humanity must revolve—even God manifested in the flesh. Without Him, all effort can never raise us above the environments of sin, and our race must sink to final destruction. Let every heart prepare Him room.

And, then, we could not help but contrast this reception with that which the Christ will give to those to whom He will say, "Well done good and faithful servant." "Welcome thou to the joy of thy Lord." Here was perhaps the most distinguished citizen of the world; one who had received honor throughout the circuit of the globe. His coming excited enthusiasm, and in many the desire to become noted; yet all this pageant was an empty show, when compared with the glory of the humblest Christian's crowning. There is not a soldier of the cross, who will not receive greater and more lasting honors, if faithful unto death.

DEATH OF REV. CARL LIENKEMPER.

From an announcement contained in the "*Reformirte Kirchen-Zeitung*," we learn, that Rev. Carl Lienkemper, of Waukon, Allamakee county, Wisconsin, died on the 14th of November last, in the 57th year of his age. For several years he has been in feeble health, and especially during the three months previous to his death was he greatly prostrated by bodily infirmities. He died in the full enjoyment of the blissful hope of immortality to be found only in Christ, which he endeavored, throughout his life, to unfold to others and to induce them to seek, as their only true inheritance.

The deceased was born on the 10th of August, 1822, at Iserlohn, Westphalia. He emigrated to America in 1848, and subsequently spent some time at the institutions at Mercersburg, Pa., in preparing himself for the work of the ministry. He was ordained in 1854, and since then has labored in four different charges. His last pastorate, which was at Waukon, extended through seven years. He died greatly beloved and much lamented by his people.

He leaves a widow and eight children to mourn his departure. They mourn not, however, as those, who have no hope. The services at his funeral were conducted by the Revs. J. H. C. Rotgen, and A. Kanne of the Reformed Church. They were assisted in them by the Rev. Mr. Schütte, of the Presbyterian Church.

F.

A DAY WITH OUR AGENT.

Mr. H. K. Binkley, the MESSENGER man, and indefatigable worker, has made his advent, with the suddenness of an April shower, among the good people of Emmitsburg, Md. He has come to see those people who do not take our paper, and show them the error of their ways, so far as this important matter is concerned. We have now been with him in his work one day—and such is his manner of working, and one day's result, as follows:

It is blue Monday—so it is called by house-keepers and preachers. But, after this, call it green, or white, or anything but blue. Why, at any rate, should not Monday be the brightest of the six, since it immediately follows the holy Sabbath, and its hallowed memories are yet fresh in the mind? So it has been with this Monday at least.

We go to the outskirts of the parish, and by the time we return to the parsonage, we have made a round of twenty miles. In this circuit we wait on five

Reformed families, and not one refuses to subscribe for the MESSENGER. A good day's work, considering the number of miles and the shortness of the day. We hope to do as well to-morrow, and then nearly all our people will be readers of the MESSENGER.

The Agent talks earnestly to the people, and shows them the importance and the duty of being intelligent Christians, and the inconsistency and the sin of preferring secular papers to a heavenly visitor and instructor like the MESSENGER. The pastor joins in the argument, on the same side, and the result is good. God bless and prosper the good work everywhere in our Zion! K.

Since the above was written, Mr. Binkley, our successful Agent, has reported twenty-four new subscribers from the Emmitsburg charge.

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.

What we have to say on the subject of stealing is not intended for the reformation of the common thief, pick-pocket, or swindler. Such characters do not read the MESSENGER, unless perchance some good prison chaplain should consider it part of his duty, to distribute copies of it in the cells of those who have been bad enough to break the eighth commandment.

There are various kinds of stealing, and various kinds of thieves. Our standard of faith (Ques. 110) teaches, that God forbids, in this commandment, "Not only such theft and robbery as are punished by the magistrate; but God views as theft also all wicked tricks and devices whereby we seek to draw to ourselves our neighbor's goods, whether by force or show of right, such as unjust weights, ells, measures, wares, coins, usury, or any means forbidden of God; so moreover all covetousness, and all useless waste of His gifts."

Supported by such authority, in language that is adapted to the common understanding, and clearly justified by the Word of God, we need not hesitate to affirm, that dishonesty of every character and form is stealing. The merchant, who knowingly uses weights and measures that are below the standard, is a thief, according to the express teaching of the Church and the Holy Scriptures. So all misrepresentation and falsehood for the sake of gain, and by which one's neighbor is defrauded of his full and just due, is theft. Indeed, it would be an endless task to show up the multitude of ways, by which men of every class and grade commit theft, without incurring the vengeance of society or the civil law.

There is one kind of theft, which, we think, presents a problem to the moral philosopher and the psychologist that is both curious and difficult. We mean *Bible stealing*! Think of a pious old lady devoutly poring over the 51st Psalm, in a Bible which she stole! Who would say she is not pious, seeing that her soul so thirsted for the precious Book divine that she even stole a copy of it? Philosophers, to the front! Tell us, if you can, whether true penitence on the part of the Bible thief will induce him, or her, to restore the stolen property, even at the expense of being deprived of its blessed counsels to the end of life; or, retaining it, such persons must read their own condemnation and doom on every page and in every word. The latter, we think, must be inevitable. A stolen Bible cannot be as delicious honey to its false possessor, but a deadly poison; or a sword, not to kill sin within him, but himself. To steal the work of an atheist would be bad; to steal a Bible, the "superfluity of naughtiness." While we make no attempt to explain the phenomenon of Bible-stealing, we nevertheless pronounce it impudent wickedness of the first class.

Akin to such singular and inconsistent theft is a sort that is much more frequent and common. We mean church paper stealing. It is done in several ways. Sometimes, but not often, we hear of persons, church members, who are too close-fisted to pay for a paper themselves, but will pick it up, when opportunity offers, and carry it off, never returning it. We have no remarks to make on such meanness, hoping that it is of very rare occurrence. But, alas! how much

better are they, who defraud the Church by refusing, year after year, to pay their subscriptions? What has become of the consciences of some people? They laugh at the odd wickedness of Bible-stealing; but what is the essential difference between that and religious newspaper-stealing? "Will pay up some day, but must pay other debts first." You must do no such thing; if you are a Christian worthy of the name, you must know that the interests of Christ's kingdom have the first claim upon you. "Thou shalt not steal" the MESSENGER, which teaches you to be honest, faithful to Christ and His Church, and liberal in the support of all her enterprises. Fifty-two times in a year the faithful MESSENGER comes to you freighted with good and valuable things, and only asks a small sum for what is worth infinitely more to all who pay for it. Remember the eighth commandment.

It is said, that even some ministers receive the MESSENGER and don't pay for it, and do nothing for the circulation among their people of the church periodicals and books. We, however, believe as much of that as we please. Such severe charges should not be made against any of our faithful ministry without positive proof. The idea of a Reformed minister taking and reading the MESSENGER and other periodicals of the Church and not paying for them is preposterous. Not until we know the worst, will we preach a sermon to them on the text: "Thou shalt not steal." K.

THE GUARDIAN.

The "*Guardian*" for January, 1880, has made its appearance. As it reaches its subscribers in the midst of the Christmas season, the Editor has taken special pains to make it emphatically a Christmas number. It will, it is believed, be generally only the more acceptable on this account. It opens with the usual number and variety of editorial notes, followed by a brief article in relation to the new volume, and another, presenting the greetings of the season. We have then, "A Christmas Carmen," by John G. Whitier. "The Divine Friend of Children," an article from the Editor, running through four columns, follows. After a brief poetical effusion entitled "Christmas day," "C. C.," from Iowa, furnishes a graphic account of "A Ride and a Night on the Prairie." "Father Christmas and the Stockings," is the title of another poetical article. "Christmas Customs," "Christmas and New Year," and "St. Nicholas," are the titles of three excellent selections, which fill out the remaining portion of the literary department.

The Sunday School department opens with an article from the "*New York Observer*" peculiarly appropriate to the season, of some length, which is followed by a few brief selections. We have then The Scripture Lessons, with the Comments upon them, which are also interspersed with interesting brief selections. These Lessons, as is known to most of our readers, are to be prepared during the incoming year, by two brethren, one appointed by the old mother Synod, and the other by the Synod of the Potomac. Whilst the Reformed Church as such can never lose its attachment to the Church Year, without becoming untrue to itself, as a Church of the Reformation, yet a desire has been felt and expressed, among a large portion of its membership, that the International Lessons should be used in our Sunday Schools, if possible, and it is purposed, as we understand the matter, on the part of the brethren to whom this work of preparing the Lessons is entrusted, to make an honest effort to use these Lessons during the present year, and to adapt them as far as possible, to the distinctive life of the Reformed Church, as this grows out of its relation to the Church year. The Lessons for the present month are taken from the International Series, and the Questions and Comments on them have been prepared by the member from the Potomac Synod. We believe them to be such as will not fail to give general satisfaction. The measure thus adopted, we trust will serve to introduce the Scripture Lessons, as prepared by our own Church, more

generally among our Sunday Schools. This is especially desirable, in view of the movements so happily inaugurated and going forward so successfully, looking to the complete unification of the Church. As the "*Guardian*" must serve as an important help to Sunday School teachers, it is to be expected that its circulation also will be greatly enlarged. The terms for the "*Guardian*" and "*Lesson Papers*" will be found in a standing advertisement in our columns. F.

Notes and Quotes.

In the Presbyterian Church there were 150 fewer candidates for the ministry in 1879, than in 1875. Last year the loss by death and removal was not repaired, by accession to the ranks. These facts have been looked upon with grave apprehension for some time.

The Board of Publication, at its late meeting, instructed us to discontinue the publication of the Comments on the Sunday-school Lessons in the MESSENGER. We are glad of this, as these Comments are available for teachers in the *Guardian*, and the space allotted to them, can now be filled with religious intelligence and general news, for which there has been a demand. The change goes into effect with this number.

The secular papers of Philadelphia last week printed the notes of the pieces sung at the children's reception of General Grant at the Academy of Music. Among the rest we find the *Trisagion*, or "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Sabaoth," so well known to many of our people. We are glad to see this recognition, and we earnestly hope that as such sacred music is likely to prevail, it will not be rendered simply as a choice composition of Mozart, or in the way of exhibition, but as an ascription of praise to the Triune God.

The *London Telegraph* repeats the rumor that Leo XIII. and Kaiser Wilhelm are to meet soon upon German soil. As the story goes, the magnificent Cathedral at Cologne is to be dedicated in the spring. The Pope contemplates visiting the King of the Belgians at Brussels next year, and would gladly extend his trip to the great Rhenish city, if the negotiations still pending between Berlin and the Vatican could by that time be advanced to a stage of mutual understanding, which would admit of an open and cordial reconciliation between the German Empire and the Holy See.

Some zealous friend of the Sunday-School Lessons, writes to the *Methodist* in regard to the defects of the system, which many are beginning to see, and the editor makes this reply:—"We wish to repeat our belief that the critics ask too much of the schools. We have ministers to preach doctrines and to teach the catechism to the baptized children. If the catechism is not taught, the fault lies between the parents and the pastors. The Sunday-School may well be devoted exclusively to the study of the text of Scripture; if other people, who are not Sunday-School officers, will do their duty, the doctrines and the catechism will be taught. Some of the pastors would do well to desist for awhile from rhetorical skylarking, and come down to the business of instruction in the things of God."

They have a new temperance revivalist in Pittsburgh, who lived in Western Pennsylvania some years ago, where he was the most wicked character around. A local paper introduces him as "an ex-prize fighter, short-card gambler, dance-house keeper, smuggler, pirate, et cetera." The paper stops here, because it could not think of any more names. There is no possible objection to those who have reformed, doing all they can against evils under which they have once fallen; but experience has shown, that there is nothing gained by bringing such men to the front. A few years ago, it was thought, that the "wickedest man in New York" was going to do more than any God-fearing minister of Christ in the city, but the sequel did not justify the expectation. The true penitent does

not care to be lionized, and the novice, when put in public position, is apt to be puffed up and bring his work into disrepute by a lapse.

A LETTER FROM JAPAN.

The following letter from the Rev. Ambrose D. Gring, our missionary in Japan, bearing date Oct. 31st, 1879, may prove of interest to the readers of our Church papers as illustrating the difficulty which missionaries meet with in learning a foreign language. Surely it requires great perseverance and thorough application on their part to master these strange forms of speech. And the Japanese is said to be a very difficult language for any foreigner to acquire.

We may the more readily sympathize with our devoted missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Gring, when we hear how diligent they are in study, and how anxious they are to commence their chosen work. We should remember them in our prayers, and cheer them by our contributions, and thus become fellow-workers with them in the good cause.

"On the first day of July last, we began to study the Japanese language by taking our first lesson in a few sentences to be used about the house. After this we began on the study and writing of the characters with the Japanese brushes, made of fox and badger's hair. Since then we have been studying all the while, with satisfactory progress to ourselves. During the heat of the summer we could study only about four hours per day; but now we study very nearly all the time, though not closely.

To-day we finished four hundred sentences in Japanese, which we have committed to memory, mostly. They are our own put into Japanese by our teacher. The plan we take is this: In our study we have a small black-board hanging on the door, on which we generally write what we wish to say in English. Our teacher then turns the sentence, or rather the idea, into Japanese, with Roman letters, as yet, but in the future we shall take their characters. After he has put the idea in Japanese, we then analyze the sentence and get the construction, and then take it from the board into our blank-books, afterwards committing and recommitting until we have it ground into the mind.

We also have our teacher repeat these sentences very often, and correct us whenever we are wrong. We also do a good deal of reading in Japanese books and have the teacher read aloud to us, when we are so tired that we can study no longer. We talk with him in Japanese, as much as we can, and often have him give us words and we put them in order upon the board.

During the nice weather I walk out a good deal, and generally take my teacher with me, and have him tell me what the Japanese names of things we see are, and then put them into a sentence, which I soon copy into a little book which I keep for the purpose. When I return home I copy these sentences into a larger book and commit them to memory. Once committing, however, is not sufficient for this language, but often the learner must repeat the process three or four times. One has to have a firm grasp or they will get away, so foreign are they to our minds. But with all this I like the study of the language very well indeed. We study the greater part of the day, but not closely—I mean we do not sit and study all the time, but we walk about, and get it in as natural a way as possible. We have our teacher here, in our home, often in the evening, to speak or practice our language. He has an inexhaustible fund of patience, and this is well, for it does require patience to teach a foreigner this language, and also patience on the part of the foreigner too. On Sunday morning and evening, I attend Japanese service, and now, since I can distinguish words, I get down as many as I can into my note-book, and then during the week I have my teacher explain them, after which I copy them into a book which I keep for that special purpose. This will, in time give me a vocabulary which will be useful. We have committed the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed, and the long metre doxology, and each morning we have family worship, at which our teacher is present. Mrs. Gring plays the organ and we sing the doxology in Japanese, at the commencement. Then I read regularly a portion of Scripture, after which we rise, and repeat together the Apostles' Creed in Japanese; and after prayer, we conclude with the Lord's Prayer in Japanese. I also use several forms in Japanese at the table regularly, which give us much pleasure. In a few weeks I hope to be able to have conversation on some little familiar topic. But as yet we have only begun to learn the language of Japan. It is a difficult language, and yet it can be acquired by steady perseverance and God's grace."

OLD HORSES NOT WANTED.

A letter recently received by the writer of this, from a brother in the ministry, who is something over fifty years of age, but yet in the full vigor of all his faculties, and ripe in scholarship and experience, closes thus: "The outlook seems to indicate my retirement in a year or two from my pastoral charge, and then where I shall go or what I shall do, I know not, as old horses are not wanted." This is from the pen of one of the very best men in the Reformed Church, who, closely observing the signs of the times, discovers, that, for some reason, there is a disposition among our people to lay men of experience on the shelf, in favor of younger men, who are supposed to be more attractive in their oratory, or in fuller sympathy with the young membership, or more thoroughly "up to the times," (whatever that may mean) or perhaps because (the lowest consideration of all) they are willing to work for a very small salary, as though this were a matter for such consideration at all.

Whatever the reason or reasons may be, the fact is patent in the Reformed Church, as in others also, that an elderly minister of experience and ability, if unemployed, has great difficulty in securing a pastoral charge. Not long since, one of our ministers, who is just now, perhaps, more fully qualified physically, intellectually, theologically and spiritually to do effective work in the ministry than he has ever been, was named to the consistory of three or four vacant charges, and in every instance, the reply was, We want a young man, either because the young people demanded it, or because the community was such as to require an unformed man, who would be willing to become what it required (a sensationalist) or because it was necessary to employ a pastor at a very low salary. The evil here set forth is very strongly put by Dr. Howard

Crosby, in his second lecture on Preaching, recently delivered before the Yale Theological Seminary, in the course of which he says: "We are led to emphasize this dependence of the minister upon the Word of God, because the pulpit is in danger of losing its vital principle, under the strong pressure of the worldly elements of society which have penetrated the Church. A congregation is too often guided by the young and worldly members, and at their demand a young and popular preacher is sought, rather than an experienced pastor mighty in the Scriptures. The outward adornments of the orator are counted at their highest, and clever satire, like that of the Middle and New Comedy of the Greeks, elicits the applause of the pews. People flock to a church where so attractive a rhetorician or actor preaches, and retire from the service with sentiments and conversation akin to that with which one leaves a concert or a play. Other churches seek to equal their so-called success. Young ministers see that large salaries are offered to performers rather than preachers, and begin to train themselves to be performers also. The Church and ministry, then, reduce themselves to the level of the stage, and form a close association with the irreligious press, which now begins to be the counselor and guide of the Church of Christ."

The truth contained in this extract deserves to be seriously considered by such congregations as have put out their sign—"Old horses not wanted."

A SUGGESTION.

During the Session of the Synod of the Potomac, the orphans, for whom the Church is called upon to care, were commended to the warm charity of the membership within its bounds. Doubtless many offerings will be laid upon the altar, especially by the children, during the Christmas services, for these fatherless and motherless little ones. May all be doubly blessed in their giving! Let me now suggest, that, in designating the special direction of these charities, the orphans under the care of the Synod of Pittsburgh, at their Home, in Butler, Pa., be not overlooked. I make this suggestion to the brethren, not that I have less love for those in the Home at Womelsdorf, but because the latter has a much larger and wealthier part of the Church to look for and draw from its support.

The Eastern Synod, under whose special care the Home at Womelsdorf is, has over 65,000 members with wealth untold, whilst the Synod of Pittsburgh has but a few over 10,000, with comparatively little wealth. The Lebanon Classis, within whose bounds this Home is located, with nearly double the membership of the Pittsburgh Synod, and with its millions of wealth, I venture to say, is to-day, better able of itself to support an institution of this kind than is the Synod of Pittsburgh. Shall we not, then, the rather help the weak? Yea, that Eastern Synod is fully able to support her Orphan Home. Let her do it! She ought not to allow the Home to go begging for a cent. Yea, she is able to roll off the debt of the Home, enlarge her operations and still have to spare of her plenty for others.

Brethren, don't forget the Orphan Home of our Church, at Butler, Pa. Whatever gifts you may have to send will be thankfully received by the Treas. of the Home, B. WOLF, JR., Craig St., Pittsburgh, Pa. This much I venture to suggest. HOFFEINS.

THE BOSTON MISSION.

The Boston mission, and the mission of the Reformed Church in New England, may congratulate themselves, that their claims have evoked at least a passing notice in the columns of the MESSENGER, and also on the floor of our Synods, if in no more formidable way, yet still in the form of pointed remarks and earnest appeals from no less a personage than our worthy Superintendent of Missions.

So much has been done, but no more. And from appearances, thus far, nothing more need be looked for by good Bro. Schwartz and his disheartened people. And why not? Because nothing has been done to open the way to do anything practical for that field.

We have a Board of Missions and a Missionary Superintendent, under whose oversight and care the recognized missions of the Church are placed, and to whom they look for men and means; but the Boston mission, and the mission field of New England are not recognized as belonging to their number. Hence, neither the Board, nor the Superintendent, can officially call upon the Church for aid in their behalf, either as regards men or means.

We are told in the MESSENGER, not by the Superintendent of Missions, but by S., that "any one disposed to assist Bro. Schwartz can remit to him." That appears to be self-evident, and yet, the more we look at it, the greater the mystery seems to become.

Does S. mean to say, that any one or more, blessed with means, is at liberty to open his heart and his purse and come to the rescue of that languishing church? That is what all knew long ago. If he means by it a modest recommendation to the wealthy, who are liberally disposed, the propriety and importance of saving this church, by helping it out of its financial difficulty, then we would remind him, that the wealthy, as a class, are, or have been, business men; and that they look upon Church enterprises, as well as on those of a secular kind, from a business standpoint and with a business eye. They will want to know, that the Boston church has at least reasonable prospects of success, before they will invest in it. Besides, no one will be disposed to give, unless he has the assurance, that his contributions will be complemented by those of others; so as not, instead of saving the church by his gifts, only to increase the loss which must be sustained in the event that the church should pass out of our hands. The same holds good with pastors and their charges. As things now stand, they can have no heart to come to the assistance of this needy cause, because neither knows whether the other will venture to take any steps to come to the rescue, and hence, each one must feel himself as standing alone in whatever efforts he may feel disposed to make. Suppose any one should take it into his heart to lift collections in his charge, and should succeed in securing and forwarding to Bro. Schwartz a considerable sum, and suppose it should end there; what good would be accomplished? Would not rather only harm be done? Viewing the subject thus, and we can see no other way as matters now stand, how can any one be disposed to do anything to save that languishing interest? All that has been done in behalf of the Boston mission, no matter how good the intentions may have been, after all, amounts

practically only to the administration of a cordial of sympathy, which may, perhaps, soothe its agonies in its struggle with death.

If the Boston mission is worthy of the confidence and liberality of the Reformed Church, then why not take it under the care of the Board, and make provision for its wants? Ah! Why not? Has not the Board more missions now under its care than it is able to support? Then, why swell the number and increase the burden?

The very fact, that that mission exists, and calls upon the Church with such persevering importunity, for help in time of need, must be evidence enough to satisfy any one who has any confidence in the divine mission of the Reformed Church, that it is the design of the Great Master, that we should bear and answer their call; and, therefore, also, equal proof that in the sight of God, we have the ability to save that perishing flock. If the Boston mission is not saved, it is not because we cannot, but because we will not save it.

If the treasury of the Board will not allow it to promise this mission a stipulated sum now, why not resort to extraordinary measures to help it out of its pressing need? Cannot Bro. Schwartz be authorized, or the Superintendent of Missions instructed, to collect funds for this purpose, by traveling over the Church and challenging pastors and people by direct and personal appeals, as Bro. Fox is so successfully doing in behalf of the Pacific Coast missions?

Should such a course not be regarded as practicable, then could not the ministry be requested by the Board to lift special collections during the "Lenten season" for this cause?

Doing this, or something like this, the Board will have done its duty; and if then the churches should fail to respond favorably, it will not be difficult to see where the fault lies.

It must surely be plain to all who have given the subject a moment's reflection, that, if the Reformed Church would not sin away her right to exist as a branch of the Church Catholic, she must now, even now, wake up to greater earnestness and liberality in the work of missions, as well as in general benevolence. And when we call to mind (however reluctantly it may be) the fact, that at the late Synod, composed of sixty-eight ministers and elders, after no less than three earnest addresses were delivered on the subject of missions, going over the whole field before us, extending, as it does, from the Pacific Coast to Boston; and recounting the many great hardships and soul-trying self-denials our poor missionaries must endure, the collection for that cause amounted to no more than twenty-three dollars, we need not wonder where the beginning must be made. If ever anything was made plain by practical demonstration, then the outcome of that missionary festival must have made it clear to us all, that if the work of missions in the Reformed Church is to be successful, then her ministry and eldership, and through them her people, must speedily come to have more of the spirit of Missions. May God, in His infinite goodness, give us more of this spirit, and that right early! A. B. K.

DEATH OF AN AGED MINISTER.

Rev. G. F. I. Yeager, an aged minister of the Lutheran Church, died at Hamburg, Pa., on the 16th of November last, at the age of 83 years, 3 months and 26 days. His aged widow survives him. She is a sister of the late Lewis Audenried, whose munificent bequest to Franklin and Marshall College at Lancaster, Pa., will be remembered by many of our readers, and has continued up to the present time faithful in her attachment to the Reformed Church, of which she is a communicant member. The following tribute to the memory of the deceased is copied from the Hamburg Item:

"Now is done thy long day's work,
Fold thy palms across thy breast;
Fold thy palms, turn to thy rest."

Were all the facts of our father's blessed life known, there would be material enough for a most noble biography. By the favor of God, he was permitted to extend his ministry in the word of God over half a century. He labored among the same congregations during the whole course of his ministry. Who can estimate the untold blessings which radiate from such a consecrated life and work? Future ages only can tell. The large assemblage of people on the day of his burial testified the love and esteem in which he was ever held. Many were the affectionate tears shed by the mourners and friends, as he was borne to his last resting-place. In the sear and yellow leaf of autumn, when the finger on the great clock-work of the seasons is already pointing to winter, was he called home and laid to rest with the fathers.

Many are the thoughts which come up for reflection at the close of such a noble life. His old age was a great blessing to himself, to his beloved family, and to the entire community. In the bosom of his own family which he had reared, gently watched over and cared for during his sickness by his aged and now bereaved widow and his devoted children, he quietly breathed his last. The infirmities of old age came upon him gradually, life was slowly ebbing away until the noontide of glory set in. The evening of life's setting was gentle and peaceful, the twilight of an immortal day had arisen. On the beautiful Lord's day of holy rest, Nov. 16th, between eleven and twelve o'clock, when the services closed in the church, where he had so often preached, and when the people departed to their homes, he passed away into the upper sanctuary of eternal rest.

In thus reflecting upon the life of God's aged servant, it becomes us to recognize the goodness of God, who gave him all these years and crowned them with His mercies. The life which comes from God is the source of the greatest happiness and bliss in this world. Every soul is created in the image and likeness of God, with powers and capacities to serve Him. And if all served God, as He intended they should, there would be supreme happiness in this world, heaven upon earth. Our aged father was eminently good. God had given him a noble soul, enriched with the graces of the Christian life. The artless simplicity and geniality of his nature must have struck every one with whom he came in contact. There was no guile or hypocrisy in his mouth. He was kind, tender, sympathetic, and charitable toward all. He served his God and generation faithfully and well. The memory of his beautiful life will be a continual inspiration and blessing to all who have known him. "The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity."

Having intimately known our aged and beloved father, we were drawn closely to him in loving regard and affection for him. We revered and loved him as a father. We shall always remember the happy hours we spent together in conversation, when he would relate some anecdote or give some experiences of his student life. We shall always cherish with fond recollection the words of wisdom and truth he spoke to us on all occasions. How often he spoke to us of his favorite German authors, and with what pleasure we listened to his admirable remarks and suggestions. He was a master in German Theology and Literature, and was a scholar in the classical languages. His sermons, ever breathing the simplicity of the Gospel, were the chaste productions of the pure and classic German, and were delivered with the fervor and unction of the Holy Spirit. Being dead, he still speaketh. He will not be forgotten. The record of his life has been engrained upon the imperishable monuments of human souls. His name will be handed down in the family record to bless the children's children, and his ministry is perpetuated by one of his sons, walking in the footsteps of the father in preaching the blessed Gospel of Christ. And if the companionship of loving hearts be so sweet on earth, what must be the happiness in heaven, when we shall be released from the burdens and infirmities of the flesh? And if the privileges of communion are so precious in Christ's Church on earth to ministers and people, what must be the glorious fellowship in heaven, where ministers and people hope to meet again?

May the faithful ministry of our departed father ever admonish us to be true and faithful to our Master, and to be earnestly devoted in holy affection and love to the interest of the people over whom He has made us pastors! May the God of all consolation and grace comfort and sustain her, who was the faithful companion of his many years, and bless the entire household with heavenly gifts, and may we all meet at last in happy re-union with those who have gone before us around one common mercy-seat! M. P.

SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS.

Little orphans appeal strongly to the tender hearts of Sunday School children. They cheerfully work for them, if they are only told how. A few months ago, the Reformed Sunday School, at Cressona, Pa., under the pastoral guidance of Rev. J. P. Stein, started in this kind of work. The school is none of the largest, but until every one had given something they had an offering of \$40 to send to Bethany Orphans' Home.

The infants of the Infant Sunday School of the First Reformed Church of Easton, have repeatedly laid their offerings on the altar of the fatherless. Lately, their superintendent allowed them to have a little Sunday School gathering of a Saturday afternoon, at which they gathered fifty dollars. This, along with eight dollars previously given, they devoted to the payment of the debt of Bethany Orphans' Home. Just think, an infant Sunday School composed of quite small boys and girls, have paid up fifty-eight dollars to pay the debt on Bethany Orphans' Home. Many other Sunday Schools will cheerfully do just as well, if they are only led in the matter.

If every main and infant Sunday School in the Eastern Synod would follow the example of these two Sunday Schools, the debt of the Orphans' Home would soon be paid. Quite recently the main Sunday School of the First Reformed church of Easton, Pa., raised a handsome sum of money, which they devoted to the payment of the debt of Bethany Orphans' Home. Another example. Let me suggest to the Superintendents of the different Sunday Schools of our Church to call a meeting of their children, set them to work for the Orphans' Home, and during the winter they could hold a Sunday School gathering of a Saturday afternoon, by which a handsome sum of money could be raised, that would soon decrease our debt on our Orphans' Home at Womelsdorf. Let us try and see what can be done.

A FRIEND OF THE ORPHANS.

ALMANACS FOR 1880.

Both editions of the English Almanac, for the East and the West, have been issued. The former can be obtained from the "Christian World" office at Dayton, Ohio, and the latter from the Reformed Church Publication Board, 907 Arch street, Philadelphia. Orders will be promptly attended to. They will be sold at the following reduced rates:

12 copies,	\$0.60
50 "	2.35
100 "	4.50

When sent by mail, ten cents per dozen must be added for postage. A specimen copy will be sent on receipt of ten cents in postage stamps.

GERMAN ALMANAC.

We have procured a supply of the German Almanac published at Cleveland, Ohio, which will be sold at the same rates at which they can be procured from the publishers, namely: A single copy sent by mail on receipt of 12 cents in postage stamps; 1 dozen, 90 cents, to which 17 cents must be added for postage when sent by mail.

Married.

At Henrietta, Blair Co., Pa., by Rev. J. David Miller, Mr. Alexander Ross Robinson, of Waterloo, to Miss Kate Thatcher, of Peru, Juniata Co., Pa.

In the Reformed Church at Burkittsville, Frederick Co., Md., on the 18th of November, by Rev. M. L. Shuford, Mr. Tilghman A. Willard to Miss Laura V. House.

On November 27th, at the home of the bride's parents, by Rev. J. Calvin Leinbach, Mr. Jacob W. Clark to Miss Annie Bigley, both of Hunterdon Co., N. J.

On December 3d, at St. John's Reformed Parsonage, by Rev. J. Calvin Leinbach, Mr. Edward K. Miller, of Riegelsville, Pa., to Mrs. Lavina Angell, of Hunterdon Co., N. J.

On the 11th of December, at the residence of Mr. George Layman, by Rev. F. B. Hahn, Mr. James H. Haws to Miss Ella B. Layman, both of New Hamburg, Pa.

At the residence of the bride's parents, near Mt. Pleasant, on Thursday evening, Dec. 12th, 1879, by Rev. A. Shulenberg, Preston S. Devillies to Mollie L. Buckley, both of Frederick Co., Md.

On the 14th inst., at the residence of the bride's father, by Rev. S. Wolf, Mr. Andrew Hainley to Miss Charlotte Rice, both of Taylor township, Blair Co., Pa.

On Dec. 15, 1879, by Rev. J. M. Evans, Mr. Michael Whitmer, of near Callensburg, Clarion Co., Pa., to Miss Mary Reed, of Leatherwood, Clarion Co., Pa.

On Dec. 16, 1879, by Rev. J. M. Schick, Mr. O. L. Stewart, of Huntingdon, Pa., to Miss Martha M. Heiffer, of Shireleysburg, Pa.

On the 17th inst., at the Reformed Church Parsonage, by the Rev. Charles G. Fisher, Mr. Joseph L. Lyder to Miss Lizzie A. C. Winkle, both of Winchester, Va.

Obituaries.

DIED.—Dec. 14th, 1879, near Rimersburg, Clarion Co., Pa., of diphtheria, Edith Caroline, youngest daughter of Reuben and Sarah Flick, aged 3 years and 8 months.

DIED.—Near Martinsburg, W. Va., Dec. 2d, 1879, Mrs. Martha Kerr Egle, wife of G. B. Egle, aged 44 years, 11 months and 7 days. Some years since she, with the family removed from Harrisburg to a farm near Martinsburg. Dying, after more than a year's suffering from consumption, her body was taken back to the old home in Harrisburg, and there laid away to rest in the hope of the resurrection at the last day, the Rev. W. H. H. Snyder officiating. May the Comforter abide with the sorrowing family.

DIED.—In Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 21, 1879, Jacob H. Flury, in the 32nd year of his age.

In this brief life was exhibited much that was worthy of admiration and praise. Especially noticeable was the strong affection which the deceased, as an only son and brother, never failed to manifest towards his parents and sisters. Ever kind, thoughtful, sympathetic and helpful, it is not strange that the family trust and hope were placed largely in him, and that his removal by death is a far more than ordinary bereavement. Had it been possible for the tenderest care, the most assiduous watching, the most devoted nursing, to preserve his life, surely that would have been done. It seemed otherwise to God, whose ways are not our ways. And, now that it is all over, as far as his life on earth is concerned, it remains but to be thankful for all the good and kind deeds he wrought in the days of his strength, for the example of patience he showed in his long illness, for his peaceful death as a child of God, and to look forward in Christian hope, with the expectation of seeing him again in the better world beyond the grave. The Lord will soothe and heal the wounded hearts of His children. He will give grace to say: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

BENEFICIARY EDUCATION.

Received per I. G. Gerhart, Treasurer of Tobieken Classis, the following sums, which have been paid over to beneficiaries of said Classis, from Sellersville charge, Rev. J. G. Dongler, pastor, \$18.83; Tinticum charge, Rev. G. W. Roth, pastor, \$4.98; Quakertown charge, Rev. F. J. Mohr, pastor, \$20; Riegelsville charge, Rev. R. L. Gerhart, pastor, \$16.30; Bingen charge, Rev. A. F. Ziegler, pastor, \$18; South Bethlehem, \$12 and South Easton \$9.75, Rev. N. Z. Snyder, pastor; Durham charge, Rev. D. Rothrock, pastor, \$25, and Lansdale charge, Rev. H. F. Seipel, pastor, \$16, \$140 86

SAM'L R. FISHER, Treas.

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THE MARKETS.

Philadelphia, Dec. 20, 1879.

[The prices here given are wholesale.]

Flour, Wheat, Superfine.....	\$4.75 @ 5.123
Extra Family.....	6.75 @ 7.00
Fancy.....	7.25 @ 8.25
Rye.....	5.37 @ 5.50
Corn meal.....	2.60 @ 2.75
Wheatmeal.....	2.55 @ 2.75
GRAIN. Wheat, White.....	1.50 @ 1.57
" Red.....	1.54 @ 1.55
Rye.....	90 @ 95
Corn, Yellow.....	63 @ 64
" White.....	62 @ 63
Oats.....	50 @ 51
Barley two rowed.....	72 @ 83
Barley Malt, two rowed.....	80 @ 90
GRAOCHINS. Sugar, Cuba.....	8 @ 8 1/2
" Refined out loaf.....	10 1/2 @ 10 3/4
" " crushed.....	10 1/2 @ 10 3/4
" " powdered.....	10 1/2 @ 10 3/4
" " granulated.....	9 1/2 @ 10
" " A.....	9 1/2 @ 9 3/4
Coffee, Rio.....gold.....	16 1/2 @ 17 1/4
" Maracaibo.....gold.....	14 @ 20
" Laguayra.....gold.....	14 @ 17
" Java.....gold.....	23 1/2 @ 25 1/2
PROVISIONS. Mess Pork.....	13.00 @ 14.50
Dried Beef.....	12 @ 13
Sugar cured Ham.....	10 1/2 @ 11
Lard.....	7 1/2 @ 8
Butter, Roll extra.....	20 @ 23
Butter, Roll Common.....	17 @ 19
" Prints, extra.....	32 @ 34
" " Common.....	26 @ 29
" Grease.....	4 @ 6
Eggs.....	23 @ 24
SEEDS. Clover, per 100 lbs.....	7.00 @ 9.25
Timothy per bushel.....	2.25 @ 2.50
Flax.....	1.55 @ 1.60
PEAS. White.....	8.00 @ 3.25
Blue.....	2.50 @ 3.05

MOTHERS, make your children happy, buy them each a pair of Solers & Co.'s Celebrated Protection Toe Shoes. The only place they can be bought is of the manufacturers, Solers & Co., 636 Arch Street, Phila.

Youth's Department.

CHRISTMAS.

Mighty God, while angels bless Thee,
May an infant lip Thy name?
Lord of men, as well as angels,
Thou art every creature's theme.

Hallelujah,
Hallelujah, Amen.

Lord of every land and nation,
Ancient of eternal days!
Sounded through the wide creation
Be Thy just, exalted praise.

For the grandeur of Thy nature—
Grand beyond a seraph's thought—
For created works of power,
Works with skill and kindness wrought;

For Thy providence that governs
Through Thine empire's wide domain—
Wings an angel, guides a sparrow—
Blessed be Thy gentle reign.

But Thy rich, Thy free redemption,
Dark through brightness, all along!
Thought is poor, and poor expression—
Who dare sing that awful song?

Brightness of Thy Father's glory,
Shall Thy praise unuttered lie?
Fly, my tongue, such guilty silence!
Sing the Lord who came to die.

Did archangels sing Thy coming?
Did the shepherds learn their lays?
Shame would cover me, ungrateful,
Should my tongue refuse Thy praise.

From the highest throne in glory
To the cross of deepest woe—
All to ransom guilty captives!
Flow my praise, forever flow.

Go, return, immortal Saviour;
Leave Thy footstool, take Thy throne:
Thence return, and reign forever;
Be the kingdom all Thine own.

Hallelujah!

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

No two nations, two families, or two persons have the same way of celebrating Christmas, or any other holiday. The Chinese have a feast which corresponds to our Christmas. It is a popular festival devoted almost entirely to the amusement of children, and in offering sacrifices and paying homage to certain deities, male and female, who are supposed to take interest in the welfare of the young. Special honors are paid to the "Seven Star Mother," or "Mother of the Measure," who is supposed to dwell among the seven stars which form the dipper in the Great Bear constellation. This goddess is believed to have power to give children long years of life, and her favor is specially sought.

The cakes they eat at this time must be round, like the moon; and the candies, of which they devour great quantities, are made in all sorts of queer shapes. This Chinese festival takes place early in October.

The Christian idea of Christmas, with its love, charity and forbearance, is most fully realized in Sweden, where some of the pagan ceremonies are still indulged in. The courts are closed; old quarrels settled; old feuds forgotten; while on the Yule evening, the shoes, great and small, of the entire household are set close together in a row, that during the coming year the family may live together in peace and harmony. Isn't there something particularly pretty and appropriate in that custom? In ancient Rome all walls of separation were broken down during the Saturnalia, or feast of Saturn, which corresponds with our Christmas holidays; and in Italy, at the present day, masters and servants not unfrequently meet, and are seated at a common Christmas-table.

In the time of Queen Elizabeth the Christmas holidays lasted over a month; everybody made merry under the mistletoe bough, and fun and frolic raged furiously.

The Germans have grafted many of their ancient religious observances upon their present mode of celebrating Christmas, and all their ceremonies are symbolic. They beat the fruit-trees, or shake crumbs about their roots, that the year may be fruitful, and are much given to processions in which the Christ-child figures conspicuously.

St. Nicholas is the Santa Claus of Holland; in a certain part of Switzerland he has a wife, who is known as St. Lucy. She distributes gifts to the girls, and he looks after the welfare of the boys. In many parts of Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands, St. Nicholas still distributes his gifts on St. Nicholas eve—the fifth of December—instead of on Christmas eve.

In Belgium, on the eve of the good bishop's voyage among the chimney-tops, the children polish their shoes, and filling them with hay, or oats, or carrots, for the saint's white horse, then put them on the table, or set them in the fire-places.

The room is then carefully locked. Next morning it is opened in the presence of the assembled household, when, wonderful to relate! the furniture is found to be topsy-turvy; while the little shoes, instead of horse's fare, are filled with sweetmeats and toys for the good children, and with rods for the bad ones.

In France, though New Year is generally observed rather than Christmas for the distribution of presents, it is the Christ-child who comes with an escort of angels loaded with books and toys with which to fill the little shoes so carefully arranged by the fire-place.

In Poland, and elsewhere, it is believed that on Christmas night the heavens are opened, and the scene of Jacob's ladder re-enacted; but it is only permitted to the saints to see it. Throughout northern Germany the tables are spread, and lights left burning during the entire night, that the Virgin Mary, and the angel who passes when everybody sleeps, may find something to eat.

The Christmas-tree is of German origin, and is the principal feature of the majority of the Christmas festivities in some parts of our own country. All our customs have been transplanted from the old world.

The *Bambino* is the Santa Claus of Italy, and is a representation of the infant Saviour, being nothing more nor less than a large doll very richly dressed and cherished with exceeding care.

The singing of Christmas carols is a very pretty custom still practiced, to some extent, in parts of England, Germany and Scotland; and Americans visiting those countries during the holiday season are particularly impressed with the sweetness of the songs that break the stillness of the wintry night, and regret that the custom is not more generally observed.

Our own Christmas-tree comes from Germany; our Santa Claus from Holland; the Christmas stocking from Belgium or France; while the "Merry Christmas" and "Happy New Year" were the old English greetings, shouted through the streets in the long, long ago.

All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from Heaven to men
Begin and never cease.

A GERMAN LEGEND OF CHRISTMAS.

It was Christmas Eve. The night was very dark, and the snow was falling fast as Hermann, the charcoal burner, drew his cloak tighter around him, and the wind whistled fiercely through the trees of the Black Forest. Although he worked very hard, he was poor, gaining barely enough for the wants of his wife and four little children. He was thinking of them, when he heard a faint wailing. Guided by the sound, he groped about, and found a little child, scantily clothed, shivering and sobbing to itself in the snow.

"Why, little one, have they left thee here all alone to face this cruel blast?"

The child answered nothing, but looked pitiously up in the charcoal burner's face.

"Well, I cannot leave thee here. Thou wouldst be dead before morning."

So saying, Hermann raised it in his arms, wrapping it in his cloak, and warming its cold little hands in his bosom. When he arrived at his hut, he put down the child and tapped at the door, which was immediately thrown open, and the children rushed to meet him.

"Here, wife, is a guest to our Christmas Eve supper," said he, leading in the little one, who held timidly to his finger with its tiny hand.

"And welcome he is," said the wife. "Now let him come and warm himself by the fire."

The children all pressed around to welcome and gaze at the little newcomer. They showed him their pretty

fir-tree, decorated with bright-colored lamps in honor of Christmas Eve, which the good mother had endeavored to make a *fete* for the children.

Then they sat down to supper, each child contributing of its portion for the guest, looking with admiration at its clear, blue eyes and golden hair, which shone so as to shed a bright light in the little room; and as they gazed, it grew into a sort of halo around his head, and his eyes beamed with a heavenly lustre. Soon he seemed to grow larger and larger, and then the beautiful vision vanished, spreading out its hands as in benediction over them.

Hermann and his wife fell on their knees, exclaiming in awe-struck voices, "The holy Christ-child!" and then embraced their wondering children in joy and thankfulness that they had entertained a Heavenly Guest.

The next morning, as Hermann passed by the place where he had found the fair child, he saw a cluster of white flowers, with dark green leaves, looking as though the snow itself had blossomed. Hermann picked some, and carried them reverently home to his wife and children, who treasured the fair blossoms and tended them carefully in remembrance of that wonderful Christmas Eve, calling them *Chrysanthemums*; and every year, as the time came around, they put aside a portion of their feast and give it some poor little child, according to the words of the Christ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—*Baptist Weekly*.

Oh! happy night that brought forth Light
Which makes the blind to see;
The Dayspring from on high came down
To cheer and visit thee.

A SHADOW.

Many things can be learned from a shadow. Let us take an example or two. First, suppose we are in a part of the country with which we are not much acquainted, and we want to know the direction in which we are traveling: we can tell by the direction in which the shadows are thrown. We have simply to note the time by our watch, and bear in mind that the sun rises in the east, and gets nearly south by midday, after which he goes west. We must, at the same time, bear in mind that the shadow is thrown in exactly the opposite direction, so that when the sun is southeast, as it always is before midday, the shadows are thrown northwest. We need but compare the direction in which we are traveling with the line cast by our shadow. Again, suppose we are out walking, near midday, in the summer, and we have no means of knowing the exact time, nor the direction in which we are walking. Take a stick—a walking stick will do very well, indeed—plant it upright in the ground; its shadow will be thrown by the sun, provided it is shining at the time, and, as it is near midday, its shadow will be short, and we can tell whether it is before or after noon, for, if before midday, the shadow will become shorter and shorter; if just after, it will increase in length. So that in this experiment we get both an indication of the time of day and the means of telling the four points of the compass. In this lies the whole secret of the sun-dial.—*The Methodist*.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears;
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
And let the base of Heaven's great organ blow
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full comfort to the angelic symphony!

DIDN'T WANT TO GROW UP BAD.

Of all the spectacles of neglect and want in a "cold world," none is more pitiful than that of a child begging, not for charity, but for Christian care and moral training. A case of this kind was recently given by the *New York Times*:

A bright little boy twelve years old, who said his name was Tommy McEvoy, went alone into the Jefferson Market Police Court last evening and said to Justice Morgan, "Judge, your honor; I want to give myself up."

"Why, my boy?" asked the court.

"Because," replied the lad, "I haint got no home, and I don't want to live in the streets and become a bad boy."

"Why don't you stay at home?"

"I haint got no home. Father's been dead nine years, and mother died before that."

"But where have you been living since?"

"With my aunt. She lives in Forty-first street. But she gets drunk, and she won't let me stay in doors. To-day she chased me out, and said if I ever came back she would do something awful to me. I'm afraid of her, and so I've got no home."

"Nobody will take me in because I aint got good clothes, and don't look nice. I can't get any work, and I can't get anything to eat unless I beg or steal it. Then the cops 'll take me in. I don't want to get arrested. I don't want to steal or be a bad boy. Won't you please send me somewhere where I can learn something, and get to be a man? There is places like that, aint there?"

The justice told the boy there were such places for good boys, and taking the little fellow under his protection, promised to find him a home in some good institution.

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth—good will to men"
From heaven's all-gracious King:
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on heavenly wings,
And ever o'er its babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way,
With painful steps and slow:
Look now, for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing—
Oh, rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When, with the ever-circling years,
Comes round the age of gold!
When peace shall over all the earth
Her ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

—E. H. Sears.

THE CHILD JESUS.

"I wonder what the Lord Jesus really did when He was a child?" said Willie, one Sunday evening just before Christmas-day.

"So do I," said Katie; "and I wish the Bible had told us more about Him; whether He went to school or not; whether He ever played, or whether He was always quiet and thoughtful."

"A good many people have felt the same wish," Aunt Kate answered; "but as God has not seen fit to tell us more, we may be sure there is some very good reason why we should not have our curiosity gratified. Still, we do know something about the childhood of our Lord, and the few notices we have teach us a great deal."

"He didn't go to school, I suppose," Katie said; "because the Jews asked, 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?' (John vii. 15)."

"Did Jesus never learn His letters?" asked Pollie, with some surprise.

"Well, the Jews didn't mean that Jesus had never learned the alphabet," Aunt Kate said; "but that He had not been taught in any of the schools of the Rabbis; and they were surprised, not at His being able to read, but at His knowing so much about the Scriptures. Whether He went to school at Nazareth or not I can't say, for the Bible tells us nothing about it."

"At any rate, I suppose He used to help Joseph at his work," Willie said; "and that proves that He must have been something like other boys."

"I've no doubt that in a great many

ways the Lord was like other boys, only we can never think of His being idle or disobedient, or anything else wrong. Very likely He did work at Joseph's trade, for the people called Him the carpenter's son; and St. Mark tells us that once they asked, 'Is not this the Carpenter?'"

"And don't we know anything else about the Lord when He was a child?" asked Pollie.

"Yes, there is another text, which surely you will remember, that tells us what He did after Mary had found Him disputing with the doctors in the temple."

"He went home with Mary and Joseph, and did what they told him," Willie said.

Katie had found the place in St. Luke, and read, "And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but His mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

"And so," said Aunt Kate, "though we know hardly anything else about the Lord's childhood, we do know that He was always obedient and gentle, setting an example to the boys and girls of Nazareth, and not only to them, but to all children in all parts of the world."

"I don't wonder that everybody loved Jesus when He was a child," said Willie; "for He must have been so good. But then it was easy for Him to be good, and it's very hard for us."

"Yes; but Willie, you know that He who was once a child, and had to pass through all the temptations of childhood, knows how hard it is for you to be good, and if you ask Him, He will help you, so that you may be like Him, and as you grow bigger and wiser, you may also increase 'in favor with God and man.' And as we think of the Saviour, let us remember why He was born into this world, and lived and died for us. It was to make us pure and holy, and to save us from our sins. Come, let us thank Him for His love." And Aunt Kate prayed:

"O Lord Jesus, we thank Thee, that though Thou wast rich, Thou didst for our sakes become poor; that though all power was Thine, Thou didst for us become a weak, helpless infant. We pray Thee to help us to be good and obedient and gentle like the Holy Child Jesus, that at last we may live with Thee in Thy Father's house above. For Thy Name's sake. Amen."

Wonderful in counsel He,
The Incarnate Deity.
Sire of ages ne'er to cease,
King of kings and Prince of peace.

Come and worship at His feet;
Yield to Christ the homage meet;
From His manger to His throne,
Homage due to God alone.

Pleasantries.

No clergyman steals, in the opinion of the *Saratogian*. "He merely forgets to turn his commas."

The *Providence Press* tells of a lady in that city who, after attentively examining a bust in a window, eagerly inquired, "And who was that Terra Cotta, anyway?"

A mob tarred and feathered a comic singer out west for eloping with another man's wife. His manager bills him now as the "Great Feathered Songster."

Never insult a man because he is poor in purse or raiment, for beneath a ragged coat it may be that a muscle lies concealed that could put a head on the oldest man in the business.

When the officials of a banking institution commence to use the funds for their own benefit, they say, "Let's speculate." Pretty soon this suggestion is slightly changed to "Let's peculate"—and they "pec."

An old hat is usually regarded with contempt and aversion, but nobody can lay down an umbrella so sick and miserable but what there is some good Samaritan always ready and willing to scoop it in.

Religious Intelligence.

HOME.

Harvard follows Yale with a professorship in architecture.

The Methodists and Baptists of Marshall, Mich., have combined, the one furnishing a church and the other a minister.

Fifty-two young men have matriculated at the General Theological Seminary (Episcopal), in this city.

The Mennonites are about to establish a mission among the Indians in the island of Kodiak, six hundred miles west of Sitka, Alaska.

The pastors of Chicago and vicinity have pledged themselves to raise \$6,000 toward paying the salaries of the Professors of the North-western Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

It will require \$15,000 to pay the expenses of the General Council in 1880. Of this amount \$10,000 has already been pledged by the Presbyterian Churches in Philadelphia.

The Methodist Episcopal Church had, according to the statistics reported up to July last, 96 annual conferences, 11,453 itinerant preachers, and 1,696,837 members and probationers. There are 444 presiding elders, and 634,967 members have died since the organization of the Church. So reports the *Methodist Year Book*, which appears for 1880, enlarged and improved.

FOREIGN.

The Anglican Church costs England \$58,000,000 a year.

During the last year the gospel was preached in one thousand towns and cities in China, where it had not been previously heard.

At Thihohu, in Japan, a new Presbyterian Church has been opened, and a graduate of Kioto, who, in the service of the Government, could command per month \$50 or \$100, has become the pastor of it at the pitifully small salary of \$4 a month.

The Belgian Government grants to the Catholics, who number 99 per cent. of the population, 4,500,000 francs yearly; to the Protestants, of whom there are 13,000, 69,366 francs; and to the Jews, numbering about 1,500, 11,220 francs.

At the Vatican will soon be established a special school of diplomacy, the object of which will be to acquaint ecclesiastical students with the history of this modern science under the Popes. Original documents preserved in the archives of the Vatican will form the basis of the instruction.

The native churches of Southern Africa, gathered from the Bechuana, Hottentot, and Kaffir races, have now enrolled some 50,000 men and women, who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who endeavored to serve God according to His Word.

The Catholic population of Canada (1,846,800) is provided for by 23 bishops, 1,599 priests, and 1,617 churches. There are also 18 seminaries, 40 colleges, 85 academies, 247 convents, 92 religious communities, 43 asylums, 34 hospitals, and 3,544 elementary schools.

"Dr. Chamberlain recently made the remark that all classes of society in Asia are becoming impregnated with the idea that their religious systems are seeing their last days, and that there is no district in India where Hindooism stands firm. If 800,000,000 Buddhists really intend to change their faith, it is a matter of some consequence what beliefs they are likely to embrace."—*Albany Evening Journal*.

At a recent meeting of the Russian ministers, it was decided to forbid the Dissenters, to repair the edifices in which they perform their religious worship. This measure, if carried out, will lead to the extinction of the chapels belonging to the fifteen million Dissenters, and they will then be without means of performing worship in public; the assembly of Nonconformists in private houses having already been prohibited by the Emperor.

The General Synod of the Protestant State Church of Prussia was opened at Berlin by a sermon from the general superintendent of Berlin, who claimed that it "is the largest synodal body that Christianity can show," representing 16,000,000 Evangelicals." The General Synod is composed of 194 members, and meets every six years. Of the delegates 149 are elected by the eight provincial synods, thirty are nominated by the king, six representatives of the theological faculties in the universities are sent up, and the nine general superintendents close the list. In the recent Synod there were 106 laymen and 88 clergymen. Business is transacted in parliamentary style, and there are parliamentary divisions of parties. Each delegate takes oath, as follows, on taking his seat:

"I promise before God that I will diligently and truly fulfill my duties as member of this Synod, according to the Word of God and the ordinances of the National Evangelical Church, and that I will so act as that the Church may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head, even Christ."

Among the enactments of the Synod was one declaring that the religious should always follow the civil ceremony of marriage. Another authorized biennial collections in Prussia for missions in Berlin, where there are church accommodations for only 40,000 out of 80,000 Protestants. Resolutions in favor of a stricter observance of Sunday as a day of rest were passed.—*Independent*.

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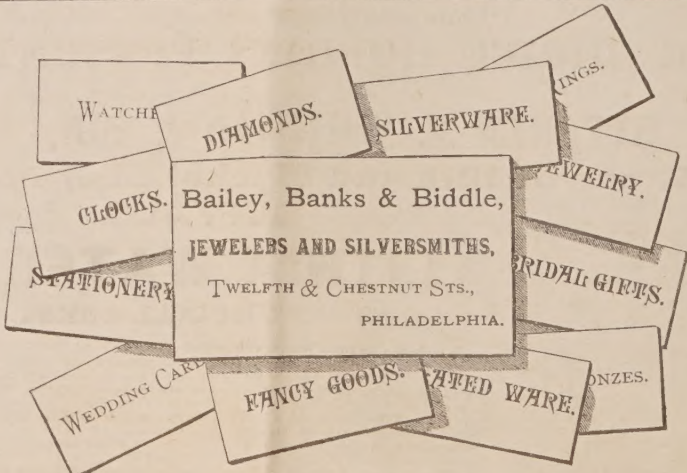
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General News.

In the California vineyards, about 1,500,000 gallons of wine were made this last season.

The Egyptian obelisk at Alexandria has been successfully lowered, and will soon be shipped for New York.

The Senate has passed a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to negotiate with the Ute Indians for the relinquishment of their reservation in Colorado and their removal and settlement elsewhere.

A rope broke at the Reading Railroad Beechwood colliery, near Pottsville, on the 19th inst., and two loaded cars went down a 900 foot slope with terrible velocity. Two men who were on duty below were fearfully mangled.

The surplus income of the Peabody donation fund, in London, amounts to \$100,000 annually, and is increasing. It is to be devoted to new buildings for workmen's dwellings, and a large block has just been planned in the Grosvenor Road, Pimlico.

The efforts to stir ill feeling between Japan and China are still made, by interested European agents, but the Japanese government is fully alive to the wisdom of Gen. Grant's counsel and is resolved to maintain a pacific attitude unless absolutely forced to hostility.

The situation of the English army in Afghanistan is very grave, as the force under General Roberts is insufficient for the numbers arrayed against it, and besides it is in a hostile country, cut off from his base of supplies.

The North Pacific Railroad earned \$202,000 in November, comparing with \$104,000 during the same month last year.

The stock in this Road advanced greatly during the late excitement, and although it has since receded, those interested in the enterprise express confidence in its entire success in the near future.

In Congress, Mr. Burroughs (Rep., Mich.) has introduced a joint resolution, proposing the following amendment to the Constitution: Article—Polygamy shall not exist within the limits of the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation. A bill has been prepared and will soon be reported—probably by the committee on post-offices—making even more stringent regulations against the use of the mails for carrying on the lottery business. There is a strong sentiment in favor of such action as will prevent any complicity on the part of the government with all such schemes for swindling the public and vitiating the morals of the community.



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